UNDYING CORRUPTION

NINE HEAVENS PRESS

PLAYER'S GUIDE

Everything a player needs to start their adventure in Danguk!

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Undying Corruption

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Pronunciation Guide 5

Introduction and Primer on Korean Culture 6

Setting 9

People of Danguk 15

Provinces 20

Races 24

- Dokkaebi 24
- Gumiho 26
- Jangseung 28
- Lunamorph 30
- Noru 32
- Sangun 34

Subclasses 36

- Barbarian: Path of the Unbound 36
- Bard: College of Ink 38
- Cleric: Hearth Domain 40
- Druid: Circle of the Medium 42
- Fighter: Deadeye 44
- Monk: Way of the Dosa 46
- Paladin: Oath of the Mystics 49
- Ranger: Emissary of Paradise 51
- Rogue: Naraka Prosecutor 53
- Sorcerer: Nine-Tailed Soul 55
- Warlock: Jeoseung Saja Patron 57
- Wizard: School of Astromancy 59

Class: Tactician 61

- Art of the General 66
- Art of the Hwarang 66
- Art of the Sancheok 69
- Stratagems 70

Weapons 73

Spells 74

Magic in Danguk 79

Campaign House Rules 81

Skill and Tool Proficiencies 82

Languages 83

Society 83

Factions 83

Cosmology 88

Divinities 91

Backgrounds 102

Timeline 105

The Kyougen Federation 111

Long Xin 120

Pronunciation Guide

Ancestries

Dokkaebi (도깨비) - Doh-kkeh-bee
Gumiho (구미호) - Goomee-hoh
Sangun (상군) - Sahn-goon

Cosmology

Bari (바리) - Bah-rhee
Dangun (단군) - Dahn-goon
Eopshin (업신) - Up-sheen
Gameunjang-agi (가믄장 아기) - Gah-m'n-jahng-ah-ghee
Gucheon (구천) - Goo-chuhn
Hallakgungi (할락궁이) - Hal-lahk-Goong-ee
Hwanin (환인) - Hwahn-een
Hwanung (환웅) - Hwahn-oong
Iseung (이승) - Ee-s'ng
Jeongrang Gakshi (정랑 각시) - Juhng-rahng Gahk-shee
Jeoseung Saja (저승사자) - Juh-seung Sah-jah
Jowangshin (조왕신) - Joh-wahng-sheen
Munshin (문신) - Moon-sheen
Samgong (삼공) - Sahm-gohng
Sobyeolwang (소별왕) - soh-byul-wahng
Seonangshin (서낭신) - Suh-nang-sheen
Seongjushin (성주신) - Suhng-joo-sheen
Teojushin (터주신) - Tuh-joo-sheen
Ungnyeo (웅녀) - 'Ng-nyuh

Society

Baekjeong (백정) - Beck-jung
Cheonmin (천민) - Chun-meen
Danguk (단국) - Dahn-Gook
Jungin (중인) - Joong-een
Nobi (노비) - Noh-bee
Sangmin (상민) - Saang-meen
Yangban (양반) - Yahng-bahn
Geum Yoon (금윤) - G'm Yoon
Goryeo (고려) - Goh-ryuh
Gyerim (계림) - Geh-rheem
Jumong (주몽) - Joo-mohng
Muryeong (무령) - Moo-ryuhng
Oh Muwon (오무원) - Oh Moo-wuhn
Seonghyo (성효대왕) - Suhng-hyoh
Samjok-O (삼족오) - Sahm-johk-oh
Seongdeok (성덕왕) - Suhng-duhk
Sureung (서륭) - Suh-ryoong
Taejo (태조) - Teh-joh
Wang Geon (왕건) - Wahng Guhn
Yeongcheon (영천) - Yuhng-chun
Yi Gyeong (이경) - Ee Gyuhng
Yoon Miteum (윤믿음) - Yoon Mee-deum

Intro and Primer on Korean Culture

The legendary god-king Dangun founded the first Korean kingdom of Gojoseon in the early 7th century BC, organizing the descendants of tribes that existed since the Paleolithic period. Over the course of that history, dynamics with larger, more powerful countries shaped and challenged the country's identity. A self-exiled military leader, Wei Man, of the defeated country of Yan in China during their Warring States period seized power, becoming Korea's first Chinese ruler. The Han Dynasty twenty years later seized land and maintained a commandery for four centuries through changing dynasties until the land was re-conquered by Goguryeo.

Echoes of conquest to colonization rippled through history from the Mongol Empire and Yuan Dynasty subordinating Goryeo in the 13th century as a vassal state and the Japanese annexation of the Korean Empire in the early 20th century. Within this dynamic, powerful nobles such as Joseon's yangban organized society in such a way that privileged landed elites, exempting themselves from taxes, while pushing the nation's physical and financial burdens upon commoners. Through this history, the Korean people created a new word, "Han/한", to describe the grief and resentment they felt living against overwhelming odds and a desire for reform amidst the anger.

Despite these sources of hardship, Korean culture and folklore has been built from the bottom, shaping criticisms against the powerful into folklore and valorizing resistance. To me, as evidenced through our arduous history, this is the true character of Korean culture. The spirit yearning for justice found in tales of the nobleman-eating Yeongno and the avarice-punishing Dokkaebi materializes through historical events led by unified fronts of common people such as the Donghak Peasant Revolution and the Gwangju Uprising.

Speaking with my fellow writers, Connie and Kappa, as we incorporate the histories of their settings based on China and Japan, we've come to appreciate that the era we seek to fictionalize exists as a turning point to the modern age. Korea's Joseon Dynasty, China's Ming Dynasty, and Japan's Edo Period shaped the paths our ancestors chose to reach the 20th and 21st centuries for better or for worse. Though we the writers of this book acknowledge our countries' roles and actions in the conflagrations of the 20th century (Japan's occupation of Korea, the Rape of Nanking, the Korean War, the Vietnam War) whose legacies Asians live through, we also do not feel that this medium of a fantasy TTRPG can properly convey the gravity of the events that took place. Through our mutual exploration of this turning point in history however, we hope to further explore our common history of cultural exchange to appreciate that such events weren't and aren't inevitable.

We must be honest about our histories while respecting each others' unique cultural identities. Injustice exists and our setting is in no way a utopia or dystopia. We only present a vision of East Asia where mythology thrives that we can explore in real time.

North and South Divide

Today, Korea remains divided between the 38th parallel into North and South following Japan's surrender and relinquishing claims to the country in 1952. This book will not touch on this aspect of history. Our setting is based on a time when Korea remained unified. To this day, whatever Koreans may think about the governments ruling the two respective regions, they still desire to return together as people. In characterizing the unique attributes of each region of our setting, we hope to give gamers a chance to play out a world in which these interactions are commonplace.

Daily Life

Confucian ideals that became prominent during the Joseon Dynasty remain embedded in Korean society. The eldest of the family must be treated with utmost respect while patriarchal norms both privilege and foist the greatest responsibility upon fathers. In Hangul, the Korean language, people must use honorifics to address and acknowledge those that rank higher than them socially or in workplaces. To refrain from doing so is considered ill-mannered. Despite this, when you're playing your characters in English, you needn't abide by the precise formalities like using specific honorifics. In practice, these codes and rules can slip in moments of passion or prejudice, sometimes taking on the weight of burdens when people feel they can't live up to these responsibilities.

Let these ideas serve as guides and remember that there is always a time and place for everything: if your character doesn't abide by these rules to the letter, then the player shouldn't be punished beyond roleplaying.

Despite the patriarchal nature of Korea's mainstream society, Korean shamanism takes on a feminine context, even as male priests carry out rituals. Heroines of folktales like Jacheongbi and Princess Bari rise to divinity and bestow providence to priests that invoke their names. As they listen to and help people through their ailments and troubles when all other means fail, patriarchal norms collapse in favor of seeking help. As the land in Danguk still benefits from the spiritual power granted by the gods and shamans maintain a prominent role in society, even the upper class cannot disenfranchise women to the degree of our real world's history and life.

Fashion

Clothing during the Joseon Dynasty was strongly influenced by Confucian beliefs and strict class-based hierarchies. Popular styles tended to obscure the body's silhouette and be quite modest while colors, fabric, and even imagery were limited based on one's place in the social strata.

Traditionally feminine garb consisted of the upper garment of the Hanbok, called a Jeogori paired with a billowing, pleated skirt called a Chima. Jeogori had wide, rectangle sleeves with large armholes and ended anywhere from an inch beneath the breasts to down to one's waist. They were typically tied across the chest with decorative ribbons and adorned with removable white collars. Sometimes they were paired with jackets, whose sleeves extended past the Jeogori's and over one's hands. Chima had high waist bands, with long ribbon sashes that could be used to tie them in place and typically were worn with a series of petticoats.

For a more masculine look, a Jeogri was still popular albeit with a different cut that extended down to the waist or even lower. This would be paired with a set of loose trousers called Baji, which were perfect for squatting or quick movement. Other variations depended largely on status or occupation, such as the longer overcoats that tied with a sash at the waist commonly worn by scholars or nobles.

Common folk tended to wear clothing made of hemp, cotton muslin, ramie, leather, or linen whereas silk was preferred by the wealthy and noble. White was the most common color choice, symbolizing purity and integrity while those of the court favored additions of red, yellow, blue, and black to represent the five elements. Embroidery and knotwork such as Norigae, were commonly used to enhance one's outfit.

Many of Kyougen's textiles and clothing styles are both adapted, but distinct from Long Xia and Danguk. In particular, the kimono and yukata have been compared to Long Xia's longfu and Danguk's hanbok. Kimono and yukata are made of multiple pieces of fabric sewn together to form a T-shape wrapped around the body. The kimono is lined and layered with multiple fabrics, while the yukata is a single layer of fabric, usually cotton. Both can be embroidered or dyed to the wearer's taste or function, and accessorized with belts or pins. One thing that sets the kimono and yukata apart from the longfu and hanbok is the specific fit. Where the longfu or hanbok are wide around the legs, the Kyougen localizations are generally tighter and somewhat restrict movement.

Food and Drink

When preparing meals, Koreans prepare a hearty assortment of appetizers called banchan/반찬. These include combinations of miniature side dishes including kimchi, marinated sprouts, fried zucchini, fried tofu, black beans marinated in soy sauce and sesame oil, and other kinds of vegetables. From personal experience, neither of my parents start the day without a hot bowl of soup and banchan which they enjoy with rice. Hearty non-soup dishes may include bibimbap/비빔밥 (a mix of rice, chili paste, meat, veggies, and fried egg), kimbap/김밥 (rice and seaweed rolls usually with vegetables and meat), jeon/전 (vegetable fritters), and ssangchu ssam/상추쌈 (rice and meat wrapped in lettuce).

Desserts exist too such as barley crackers, yakgwa (honey cookies), sweet rice cakes, shaved ice, or simply a plate of fruit. Drinks include fruit, flower, corn, grounded grains, barley tea, and shikye/식혜, a sweet rice beverage of honey and pine nuts. Most alcoholic drinks are types of rice wines like soju/소주 and makgeolli/막걸리, but exceptions exist like baekseju/

백세주 (herbs and ginseng wine) and maesil-ju/매실주 (plum wine). You might have noticed that rice and other grains are critical in a Korean diet: not just as a side dish, but in much of our cooking. In the 15th century, Koreans ate double to triple the amount of rice that the Chinese and Japanese did. Food is an important part of Korean life.

Architecture

In ancient times, the construction of an ideal Korean home always incorporates the natural environment surrounding it. Geomancy was an important factor: the shapes of mountains, hills, rivers, and plains carried a flow of energy that determined mood and fortune. In this magical setting where indeed the land carries powerful spiritual energy, these considerations must be taken doubly seriously. Homes were built with an ondol/온돌 system of transferring heat through a stove built in a lower level through the floor. Wealthier homes such as hanok/한옥 consist of multiple houses and buildings, each with their own unique purposes, all joined together between a courtyard decorated with grass, trees, and stones. These estates are built with 99 rooms; no more than that to show deference to the king whose palace contains 100 rooms.

Religion

In writing this, I would like to express beforehand that as a Korean-American, I (Minki Kim) identify as Protestant. My aim in this section is to paint a broad brush to give readers a most general view of perspectives on religion rather than delving too deeply into their respective beliefs and tenets.

Korean surveys and census data, around 55% of Koreans reported being irreligious while Protestantism, Catholicism, and Buddhism remained the three dominant religions out of 44% of respondents. The final 1%, largely consisting of convertants and their descendents from the Korean War or South Korea's South and Southeast Asian migrant communities, practice a mix of religions such as Hinduism, Islam, Judaism, and Sikhism. Though largely a secular country, the diversity of religion in Korea reflects its history of cultural exchange, both on equal terms and as colonial subjects with other countries. Though Christian denominations secure about 25% of the faithful in Korea, fundamentalist Protestant institutions exercise outsized political influence and have targeted Buddhism and indigenous faiths of Korea with campaigns of arson and vandalism. They're also seen as major hurdles toward achieving LGBT rights in Korea.

Muism, or native shamanistic faith, has been argued by scholars to not be properly reflected by censuses and it's possible a large number of those who identify as "irreligious" practice the faith. It's not uncommon for adherents to also practice multiple religions, recognizing harmony among their beliefs. Though Japanese colonial powers and the South Korean government of the 20th century attempted to suppress the practice of Muism, it has seen increased popularity during periods of national or economic turbulence such as the IMF crisis in 1997. Muism, due to its feminine gender coding of practices, empowers women into positions of priesthood to commune with spirits, which is viewed in contrast to patriarchal hierarchies in other beliefs such as Confucianism.

Koreans individually find empowerment and meaning through faith, but sometimes in their journeys, they get taken advantage of by self-interested people posing as spiritual leaders. With over 300 active cults in Korea, many incorporate traces of Christianity, Buddhism, or other beliefs into their dogma. The existence of these cults hint at systemic problems unique to a country struggling with its search for identity, being in the midst of global powers while rising economically. These abuses of leadership and trust heighten skepticism among Koreans that religion should influence public and political life. Just as this tension exists in all countries, Koreans too struggle to explore their spirituality in pursuit of community, inner peace, and moral betterment.

THE SETTING

H. Won

Both the kingdom of Danguk and Iseung were designed to be compatible with any campaign setting, give or take some additions to suit the GM's needs. The worldbuilding outside of Danguk from countries to planes are left to the GM and the players to decide what narrative elements they would like to introduce into this campaign.

The people of Danguk refer to the material plane they occupy as "Iseung", or literally "This World". "Iseung" can also interchangeably be used to describe the diplomatic network Danguk shares with other nations. Other cultures might have different names for their world, but the people of Danguk refer to it as such because they understand the material world is merely one stop in a near-infinite journey. Every creature in Iseung lives, dies, and passes on to Jeoseung, or literally "That World", where they will receive judgment for their actions in life. The gods have willed the people of Iseung to be tempered by their suffering and eventually reach a state of perfection.

The Mudang

A person becomes a Mudang in one of two ways; dedication or birthright. Those who are born into an ancient bloodline, deeply connected to the gods, are called hereditary Mudang. They are expected to take on the duties of their ancestors, serving to lead rituals and Guts, but have no special magical prowess of their own. The gods and spirits of the land are unable to communicate to or through hereditary Mudang and they are largely unable to enter a trance outside of the spiritual sickness they experience upon being initiated. This subgroup of Mudang begins their training from birth.

The second type of Mudang is commonly referred to as charismatic Mudang. Those that fall into this category begin life as ordinary mortals and can be from any race, creed, or social caste. Typically, signs of their future occupation start to shine through in adolescence or early adulthood and can include things such as sudden bouts of weight loss, nightmares or visions, and frequent unexplained illness. Supernatural creatures and spirits are drawn to these Mudang and families who do not recognize their child's calling early on may risk losing them to possession.

Both types of Mudang undergo years of training under a senior Mudang, usually referred to as a "Spirit Mother" or "Spirit Grandmother". They learn various arts including dance, instruments such as drums or bells, cooking, and sewing alongside spiritual practices such as trancing, rituals, and how to craft offerings. But before they can begin this training, a potential Mudang typically becomes affiliated by an intense spiritual sickness. Food becomes unappealing, vision blurs, hallucinations and strange voices overwhelm the senses, and the body of the victim becomes extremely weak. There are only two resolutions to this illness; death or acceptance of one's fate as a new Mudang.

The Mudangs' most advanced technique is to perform a ritual known as a "gut" wherein they commune directly with gods and spirits, often undergoing possessions. Their task during this ritual is to find out what a restless spirit or Akryung desires, or what ails them, and do everything in their power to mediate between earth and the ethereal. Force is sometimes necessary to tame a spirit's restlessness to bring them to a proper conversation.

Beware the Dark Mudang: The Mudang's highest responsibility is to mediate between the material realm and the occult, but a Dark Mudang surrendered to dark wills from beyond. They harness evil spirits, gods, and the Akryung to curse the living world. Since the fall of the Goryeo dynasty, Mudang have fallen astray, spurned by a new order that treats them as second class citizens. Most revere and pray for the advent of the Emperor of Darkness, an earthly vessel for all the evils of the world, to wipe the lands clean of life. These Mudang are criminalized in Danguk as cultists and wicked necromancers.

Kem Mackey

DANGUK

Creation

Danguk is a land originally founded by the gods of Gucheon, the Heavenly Realm. Specifically, Hwanung, the "Supreme Divine Regent", wished to live alongside mortals and share with them the means of attaining divinity. His father, Hwanin, or the "Heavenly King", used his son's desire as an opportunity. He wished to test a new system that enabled souls an opportunity to ascend into a higher state of being instead of being parceled out to the afterlives of various gods. The souls of every individual in Danguk will live multiple lifetimes already in different bodies, times, and social and economic circumstances. In death, they will be delivered to Jeoseung, an afterlife of Hwanin's design, to have their sins cleansed before sending them to start anew in achieving divinity.

In doing so, someday, the god's creations will someday stand alongside their creators as equals.

Hwanung's Reign

After Hwanung descended onto Iseung, a sandalwood tree sprouted at the first spot he stepped on. The people (mostly humans, orcs, and elves) already living in the lands, scattered into myriad, warring tribes and factions, recognized his divinity. They accepted the laws and moral codes of his new kingdom. In turn, the people were also taught new forms of art and agriculture, and Hwanung bequeathed them with both medicinal techniques and divine magic. For centuries, they lived in harmony under his rule and in his City of the Gods.

Hwanung knew that in spite of his wish for a stronger connection between the divine and mortals, the latter could not ascend if they were dependent on the former. Years after he agonized over how to leave his land to the people, two of his servants, the Divine Beasts, Bear and Tiger, sought his help. They wished to renounce their divinity, yearning for the imperfections and happiness of mortals.

Showing them mercy, Hwanung offered the two a test: with nothing but twenty bulbs of garlic and mugwort, they must survive in the darkest pits of a cave far from sunlight for one hundred years. When they left, they would achieve humanoid forms. It is said that Tiger in her impatience ate her meager rations and left, but in truth, she gave her share to Bear. Bear wished to take on a form that could love Hwanung, and Tiger, simply wishing for Bear's happiness, gave her her share and left.

Bear left after a hundred years, now mortal, took on the new name of Ungnyeo and returned to Hwanung, winning his love. The two wed and bore a child, the Dwarf, Dangun, who would become the first King of Danguk. Hwanung grew old and having spent too much time in Iseung, his spiritual body decayed into a lesser, invisible deity, said to still be watching over his lands. The Bear, the Dowager Queen of the newly christened lands, helped and made sure Dangun, the first mortal king, unified and brought prosperity to his people.

Dangun, the Half-God King

Since the founding of Danguk, its fate has been inextricably tied to the Realms Above the Heavens. Dangun sought to solidify his parents' wish and organized his country as an animistic theocracy. Councils of Druids were appointed across the land to communicate on behalf of people with the spirits and divinity innate in all life. Those born in Danguk are said to be more spiritually awakened. Many were victims of possessions, often by souls that clung onto Iseung.

As a consequence of the cycle of rebirth becoming strictly contained in Danguk, more Undead who refused to pass on, called Gwishin, began appearing. They envied the living and sought to regain a semblance of life. For some, jealousy warps into hatred and they became Akryung, malevolent spirits terrorizing the living world. This happened with greater frequency as more resisted passing on. Dangun dealt with this first by sealing the country, adopting a strict, isolationist policy to contain the Akryung.

He then took drastic measures for the sake of bringing order to the land. To maintain his isolationist policy, he approached the most powerful dragons of the north, south, east, and west, and offered to speak on their behalf to Gucheon. The dragons were feared by the mortals for their raw power over the skies, seas, and storms. Hwanung was wary whether they might set their sights on Asadal,

the City of the Gods to try and plunder it, but Dangun extended a hand to them. The noblest and most powerful among them would be recognized by the gods each as rulers of the four cardinal directions. Unable to resist the allure of becoming kings, the pact was sealed and the four Yongwangs agreed to help protect the lands from the Akryung.

Dangun passed on and though the country was stable, the Akryung continued to persist. The Queen Dowager used her longevity to guide the rulers of Dangun to govern justly until she too passed on. This, and the discontent of the populace enabled opportunistic nobles to divide the land by factional lines. They were divided over whether to open the country as Long Xin and Kyougen influenced clans.

Princess Bari and the Mudang

Meanwhile, during this period of turmoil, a noble's wife gives birth to her seventh consecutive daughter. The noble, furious, orders that she be thrown out into the wilderness, but is rescued by a kind, elderly couple. Princess Bari, or the Abandoned Princess, grows to be a strong woman under the couple's loving care, but is still curious about her true parents. Learning that they've fallen deathly ill, she journeys into Jeoseung, braving the perils of the Underworld, and procures the Flowers of Resurrection to heal her parents. This act of profound charity, braving the harshest, planar climates and risk of capture by powerful Underworld monsters despite having no extraordinary power, allowed her to ascend into divinity.

Bari's connection to Jeoseung granted her divinity as a new Jeoseung goddess. Being one of the first to have ascended, Hwanin found Princess Bari's ascension as the proof he needed of the experiment's success. Bari, however, wasn't pleased to find that the people's suffering in life and after was orchestrated by the deities of Gucheon.

Instead of rebelling against them, she accepted her position as goddess of the Jeoseung Saja. Tasked with governing the messengers who claimed the land's souls, she reformed their practices to help ease the harsh transition into death.

"Through these reforms, she gave death a kinder face and tasked the Jeoseung Saja with guiding the dead to their final resting places. This resulted in a reduction of Akryung. Her influence in Jeoseung put a check on the powers of the Narakwang, the brutal deities charged with judging the dead by Hwanin.

In honor of the Queen Dowager, who guided the land of Danguk through the reign of several kings, this organization between the land of the dead and these awakened mortals came to be called the "Black Bear Clan".

The Emperor of Darkness

For over 1500 years, Jeoseung has been dealing with the difficult disposal of the malice left over after the cleansing of a mortal's soul. It was the proposal of O-do Jeonryun of Customs, one of the Narakwang, to transfer the malice into a remote, empty plane. Yeomra the Regulator, highest of the Narakwang, approved, allowing the sins and malice of mortals in Danguk to gather together for over a millennium.

When the first rift connected this plane to Danguk, the sludge of malice seeped into the lands, taking shape as legions of Akryung. The largest collective of Akrying merged and possessed a single person to act as a bessel for over a thousand year's worth of hatred and selfishness. They shared a single cacophonous voice and a wish for the world's end. Thus, the Emperor of Darkness was born whose terrible strength fractured the tranquility of Danguk for years to come.

The Emperor was only exorcised through a combined effort that required Hodamguk, the Yongwang, and the Black Bear Clan. But the threat it posed undermined the Mandate of Heaven that blessed the rulers of the City of the Gods. This was but one of the factors that ultimately saw the fracturing of Danguk into smaller states that would desperately seek their reunification.

Nidhi Naroth

The Eras of Fracture

While the start of Danguk's history is largely inspired by existing myths and folklore, the following eras are parallel to Korea's own history but in more broad strokes. The intent is to allow GMs and players to engage with true Korean history alongside traditional fantasy.

Through the Three Kingdoms era, the country was in constant turmoil. As states of varying sizes fought for their national interests. Gyerim, Saro, and Goguryeo were among the most dominant at the time. All the while, Danguk's neighbor to the north, Long Xin, analogous to China, would expand its influence.

Even through the Fractured Eras, though the people deemed it important that their leader have the legitimacy of divinity, leaders believed this less important than their own ambitions. It is a period where the country of Danguk fully rebelled against the whims of great Hwanin who later pulled his patronage from the lands, enraged at the deplorable state of things.

A semblance of stability had finally been established when the Yongwang of the North intervened and set in motion a plan to infiltrate society through his brood. With their cunning and influence, they overthrew the deranged despot at the helm of a land abandoned by the gods and restored order. The Yongwang and the Wang Clan ruled under the pretense that mortals are unfit for self-governance and would take a heavy hand through a military dictatorship in leading them to meet the gods' standards. Hwanin approved, overlooking the Yongwang's transgression and giving his blessing.

A general, Yi Gyeong, later King Taejo, would later revolt hundreds of years later against the government of Goryeo, to free its people that had been stifled under the Wang Clan's repressive regime. He forged an alliance with the country's bards and scholars whose pursuits for knowledge were restricted by the order. At a time when the nation's coffers ran dry, yet the Wang Clan continued to pursue military expansion, Yi Gyeong redirected his forces and marched against the country's hidden ruler: the Northern Yongwang. He prevailed, returning sovereignty back to the mortals.

The Age of Illumination

Danguk's shift in priorities following the beginning of the Age of Illumination allowed its scholars to refocus on how the world had changed since the country fractured. The Hall of Worthies, led by the government's Agency of Sage Arts, had begun a mad dash to catch up to the rest of the world. Their efforts were fully funded by the new government resulting in the country's golden age.

Old pacts forged by Dangun with the heavenly realm of Gucheon and the four Yongwang were restored, returning divine power into the land and the protection of dragons. With the scholars' successful efforts at developing a practical application of Astromancy, which had already been a field of interest in the Zhu Empire and abroad, Danguk grew as an independent force in the region. This development enabled Danguk to make early contact with the Lunamorphs, beginning a trade in magical knowledge and technology that hastened Danguk's development.

Despite that, the Mudang and the Black Bear Clan have lost all institutional support from Danguk's government. Having taken a neutral stance in the centuries the Wang Clan ruled Danguk, they are now ostracized from society. Disorganized sects throughout the land, shadows of their former selves, carry the deed of exorcising the Akryung that still roam the lands. The adventure starts in modern Danguk, a time of great optimism in the country's history, but also of hidden dangers and societal injustices overlooked by the country's elites.

Angelica Kim

Left to right: Jeong Kim, Nidhi Naroth, MLarty

THE PEOPLE OF DANGUK

Danguk is home to diverse groups of people with varieties of ancestries, moreso in modern times as the country fully opened up to visitors and immigrants. The following descriptions of some basic facts and statistics of how ancestries fare in Danguk should help guide you as you create your character's backstory. None of the following information is meant to decide where your character should come from or how they should have lived their lives.

This section is meant only to set up some material foundations concerning the people of Danguk that you can take into consideration.

Dokkaebi

The Dokkaebi began appearing after the fracturing of Danguk. People initially thought them to be an evil omen, a sign of the Emperor of Darkness's lingering presence in the world. In truth, as life grew more difficult in Danguk and spiritual energy remained strong in the land, Dokkaebi appeared as if in response. They always represented the unvarnished desires of mortals and this made them an object of revulsion, envy, and awe. Few Dokkaebi even assimilated into society, though whenever one has a name people remember, they often leave a mark on history.

The Dokkaebi have most often been allies of the Black Bear Clan, fighting against Akryung that they regard sometimes as wayward siblings. They operate in the margins of Danguk society, being part of movements and efforts that the common people rarely are privy to until they're ready to explode. They're rulers of Danguk's night when the bureaucrats and ministers have gone to sleep.

Dragonborn

Dragonborns are relatively common in Danguk following the pact Dangun forged with the Yongwangs. The Yongwangs sanctioned their citizens to move up to the surface after Dangun designated Dragons as a protected species (meaning it is forbidden to hunt and kill them, though this designation is annulled if the Dragon has been found to have harmed the people of Danguk).

Since then, Dragonborns have formed their own tribes and clans, gaining influence for their perceived connection to the noble Yongwang. Dragonborn settlements can often be found near rivers and ports where their true Dragon ancestor once resided. Each clan has been entrusted with a Dragon Egg by the Yongwangs that will hatch into a prototypical Dragon native to Danguk called an Imoogi. If the Imoogi lives in water for one thousand years and is gifted with a Yeouiju or a Dragon Marble, it will become a true Yongwang.

The Ryu clan in particular is composed of Green scaled Dragonborn who grow to be powerful sorcerers. Their success in crafting Yeouiju or Dragon Marble and raising multiple Imoogi that grew to be princes and princesses of the Dragon Palace earned them great prestige. This was owed to their ability to manipulate the weather and purify water, which they've used to profit regionally.

Clanless Dragonborns do not hold much prestige in modern Danguk for fear of their relation to the despised and deposed Wang Clan. Though they're looked on as a symbol of fear, clan affiliations and class determine how Dragonborns are treated in Danguk society.

Dwarves

Dwarves are the most common ancestry in Danguk. They trace their origins all the way to Ungnyeo and Hwanung's union and are often referred to as Bear People. The strongest clans take pride in the fact that they are the children of the descended god. Clans, particularly of Eastern Danguk and the Kingdom of Saro, have made their trade as the nation's premier artisans and are able to make a decent living in cities. The oldest Dwarven clans who trace their lineage back to the kingdom's founding are mostly based in the Capital, declaring the protection of the Sandalwood Tree their responsibility by birthright. For that reason, the heads of the most powerful families are typically Clerics of Ungnyeo.

The Dwarves that shun city life are more independent and industrious. They operate their own trade and settle in areas with humanoid populations to provide a service. Breweries, inns, and taverns are commonly owned by Dwarves. These same Dwarves sometimes attempt to take the military service examination as a means of finding their unique place in the country. Community and belonging are important virtues to Dwarvish society.

Elves/Half-Elves

As a land rife with Fey, it's no surprise that elves would call Danguk their home. Considering Danguk's relatively young existence, their eldests remember from the country's beginning. This ancient memory allows Elves lucrative positions as the land's foremost historians and chroniclers. Few others can claim that their close relatives witnessed the descent of Hwanung from the heavenly realm.

Elves began appearing in Danguk around the same time Hwanung connected the material realm to the spiritual. As Fey appeared, so did Elves to form tribes around forested areas. Most of these clans preferred to adopt policies of non-intervention, especially when the kingdom of Danguk fractured into multiple, smaller states. For this, through history, they were viewed with suspicion and persecuted during the Fractured Era. Those wishing to expand their artistic horizons left the forests and moved into towns.

While not as powerful as the Dwarven clans, Elves and Half-Elves are valued as scholars and artists with the latter facing more difficulties overcoming prejudice. Some have even passed the civil service exam and become Yangban, but most eke out a living as Jungin. Those uninterested in these pursuits often become traveling performers that journey to wherever people are and entertain for lodgings from night to night.

Gnomes

Though Gnomes aren't native to Danguk, they began immigrating there after the scientific revolution, particularly from the Zhu Empire. As Danguk begins briskly catching up with, and surpassing in some regards, the rest of the world in terms of scientific development, eager Zhu gnomes seek to make their mark in world history.

They're often found in cities, making their trade as merchants, apothecaries, and engineers. Of the clans in Danguk, Gnomish clans are all new, yet rapidly on the rise. Their longevity encourages a devil may cry attitude which doesn't suit civil service in Danguk, a field suspicious of free thinkers. They've quickly

become a staple of city life as new immigrants to the land. Communities that accept Gnomish clans find new excitement in their lives.

Halflings

Since the wars that split Danguk and the turbulence of the Gyerim and Goryeo periods, Halflings have adopted nomadic lives in pursuit of tranquility. Adopting patterns of olden days, few stay too long in one place, usually repaying communities kind enough to house them with a favor and moving on. They have embraced the teachings of Moksaka, guiding others to let go of their material attachments and pursue tranquility of body, thoughts, and soul.

A notable monk of Moksaka in Danguk is Jinhwi, a Halfling ascetic whose body is said to have been mummified alive. As leader of the Ondal Order, which preaches of radical liberation, including from societal expectations, some view his teachings to be at odds with the State. While Jinhwi represents the extremities of the Halfling ideal of tranquility, others strive for simple lives full of good food and friends. Most are commoners and peasants.

Humans

Though Humans have existed in the lands before Hwanung's descent, they are among a minority in Danguk. Still, they are considered to be Hwanung's first subjects and despite their relatively short lives, they've been part of crucial moments in Danguk's history. They only recently came into prominence as Yi Gyeong, a Human general, betrayed the Goryeo court and claimed the throne. Since then, Human clans, most of which were aligned with more powerful Dwarven or Dragonborn clans, came into prominence as the new nobility.

Though more Human clans occupy the upper crust in recent times, their numbers are scattered across all classes. Given their short lives, they wish to leave behind a legacy. Compared with other groups, they have an individualist streak that differentiates members among clans. They've always been part of Danguk's history, whether at the forefront or the margins, and promise to thrive.

Goblins

Sometimes mistaken for Dokkaebi, Goblins are a curious minority in Danguk. While even Goblins have forgotten exactly how their ancestors emigrated into Danguk, few care about such details unimportant to their present moment. The most common theory among Dangukese scholars is that they were a nomadic people shipwrecked in the lands who decided to settle. As far as people can remember, they've often been made livings as sailors, gravitating to the wealth of food in the seas. Tales of a Goblin insulting a Yongwang have given them an unfair reputation as tricksters.

In truth, Goblins rarely care for conforming to the society they occupy and live according to what they desire at the moment. Savvy people in Danguk understand this and have learned to help them channel this mindset into creative pursuits. Some Goblins have become expert shipwrights and are responsible for eccentric, yet brilliant designs that revolutionize fields of naval combat or trade.

Gumiho

Among the Primordial Beasts that ruled prehistoric Danguk, none more infamous than the Primordial Fox still frightens people in the present day. The other beasts acquiesced to the formation of the new kingdom at the command of the gods either after resisting or peaceably, but the nine-tailed fox revolted till her last breath. She hunted mortals and not content to eat their livers and hearts, she consumed their souls, only to be hunted down herself when coexistence became impossible. While her fellow beasts ascended to the ranks of gods, the Primordial Fox's soul shattered and its fragments entered the cycle of reincarnation. She vowed someday that a successor would come and tear down the works of mortals and deities.

This is the fear that those in Danguk live of Gumiho which drives their prejudice against them. When a fox achieves sentience and grows multiple tails, they are regarded as "Children of the Nine-Tailed", believed in worst cases to be the primordial one's reincarnation. Though they receive a fragment of her magic and power, they are not born sharing her perspectives. Gumiho seek out a place to belong often while hiding their true form behind a humanoid

facade, either integrating with society or engaging with it from afar. The powers they inherit stem from a terrible hunger, sometimes referred to as the Curse of the Primordial. While this hunger is often misconstrued as directed toward desiring flesh or souls, it's more accurate to describe it as a formidable ambition to evolve. The manner in which Gumiho desire growth is dependent often on their personal experiences (for example, a gumiho might pursue academic growth by voraciously reading through tomes and grimoires, might seek physical perfection through training one's body, or pursue it through love with multiple partners). Gumiho that channel their hunger productively often master any field that they enter and garner people's undying respect, whether or not they are aware of their true identity. Ordinary gumiho, knowing that assimilating into society requires that they master their hunger, live solitary lives, or set up small communities in forests or abandoned settlements to support each other.

Jangseung

In ancient times, the appearance of a Jangseung often coincided with times of strife. They've been respected as protectors and gained the full trust and support of Mudang in their celestial mission. Many villagers revere them as direct agents of deities offer them their prayers in the hopes the gods can hear their pleas. In recent years, with the dawning of the age of Luminism, they're viewed in large cities where Luminists wield influence as eyesores and relics sent by the meddling gods. They're treated there as little better than sentient constructs.

In contrast to either extreme, Jangseung may be driven by duty toward the gods, but they possess free will to best interpret their missives and adapt to their surrounding circumstances. They often act as workers whose employers sent them a great distance and keep aloof with those they engage with in the material plane, knowing their time is limited. Jangseung who stay in the mortal world for extended periods of time often develop attachments. When it comes to other Jangseung, they communicate with each other as they would colleagues or workers in the same field. Some that develop homesickness for their respective planes create communities rife with magic that attempts to replicate the aesthetic qualities of their old homes.

Lunamorphs

Like Gnomes, Lunamorphs only emigrated to Danguk from the Moon recently. While their recent appearance makes most people wary of their motives, people are fascinated in their origins from beyond the world. They're capable tinkerers, well-versed in technology used to travel planes, and celestial bodies to limited degrees. Though few in number, they've captured the imaginations of Danguk and have been deemed by the throne to be friends and honorary ambassadors of the Moon.

Most Lunamorphs that have traveled to Danguk have tremendous wanderlust and travel the lands to learn more about the blue planet that has progressed so far without them. The few that have settled are often Astrologians and sages who even lecture to members of the Hall of Worthies of reading the stars.

Orcs/Half-Orcs

Orcs are among the longest lived ancestries in Danguk alongside Humans and Dwarves. While some clans have accepted Hwanung's rule, others have maintained their existence as nomadic tribes to the north of Danguk. Like the elves, these tribes have adopted policies of neutrality with Danguk. During the political instability of the Fractured Era, Orcish tribes renounced their neutrality and pledged allegiance with the scattered kingdoms of Danguk. Scholars speculate this was done partially to reduce casualties but also in the service of their own interests. They were eventually assimilated into the kingdom of Goguryeo. That era was a time when Orcs were highest in prominence through the example set by the half-orc, half-god Jumong.

Since Goguryeo's collapse, many remained in the north while others have assimilated into Danguk. High ranking officials of Danguk distrust the prominent Orcish clans for their proximity to the Zhu Empire's border. These clans that can trace their lineage back to the golden era of Goguryeo remain powerful in Danguk, boasting members who are prominent poets and military leaders.

H. Won

Sangun

The tiger people of Hodamguk have a complicated relationship with Danguk. They've been tasked by their creator goddess, Honyeo, to protect the children of Ungnyeo. The interpretation of this command varies for every Sangun and their individual answer typically reflects their outlook on life. The Sangun have existed as long as Danguk has and they've passed on a virtue of adhering to the will of the strongest, though this doesn't necessarily mean that the strong must subjugate the weak.

Assimilating into Danguk society has always been difficult. The Sangun are known to have a fiery temperament and are likely to hold grudges. Despite their mother goddess's command, the country of Hodamguk has not forgiven Danguk for its instances of betrayal, particularly during the Gyerim era. They use their brute strength to slay Akryung in accordance with their creator's desires. Though the Sanguns' values over strength and power conflict with those of Danguk's ruling literati, it's commonly accepted that their existences are nevertheless tied to the land. Despite everything, the Sangun still command the respect of the ordinary residents of Danguk.

Tieflings

Out of all the people of Danguk, Tieflings have the most difficult time of assimilating. Natives to Danguk trace their lineage back to souls that have escaped Jeoseung, finding new companions as Fiends while hiding, or from unions between Akryung and mortals. Others end up in Danguk either by immigrating or as former pirates who were given a small plot of land and work after being captured. In either event, Tieflings have the unfair reputation of being associated with a criminal element that they must push against to make a living.

Communities that get to know individual Tieflings, however, come to accept them as their own. The best of people can put aside their personal prejudices in favor of mutual interest and friendship and they would protect Tieflings as among their own. Still, tieflings have the most difficult life as they disproportionately are among the lower classes. A few have broken barriers and come into prominence as legendary performers.

YONGNAK PROVINCE
YUHWA PROVINCE
SARO PROVINCE
GARAM PROVINCE
1
2
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Vanessa Wei

PROVINCES

1. Yongnak Province: A segment of the kingdom that was once Goguryeo. Yongnak, out of all provinces in Danguk, suffers from the most extreme climates depending on the time of the year. It's sealed off to its east and west by mountains, bottlenecking potential invaders from the north to the gates built by Long Xin and Danguk. Farmers also live in these mountains and support themselves by growing ginseng.

Most of the province's population lives in the industrial, military city of Gungnae which was originally constructed in Goryeo to house Danguk's army and fend off invasions from Long Xin. Most airships that travel around or into Danguk dock in Gungnae to refuel through its city airport. During the Age of Illumination, its factories have been converted to create commercial goods instead of military equipment. While the military was transferred to Asadal, Dangukese army bases remain prominent in the city to oversee matters related to the Orcish and Dragonborn tribes that claim sovereignty.

Many Sangun have immigrated to Gungnae, finding the extreme temperatures, especially the cold, more agreeable to them.

2. Hodamguk: Once the body of Honyeo, the Primordial Tiger, Hodamguk is the birthplace of the first Sangun people. Like the Yongnak Province, its climates range between the extremes from humid forests to icy mountain peaks. Few adventurers in Danguk tread into Hodamguk as they recognize it as a land where only the physically strongest survive. The people of Hodamguk coexist alongside nature. Though they understand the ways of building civilizations, they eschewed following the practices of the people of Danguk to ensure they do not build faster than nature can grow. Fearsome beasts walk the streets of Sangun villages as if nothing was awry.

The closest space to a city in Hodamguk is the Tomb of Honyeo, the grandest monument built by the Sanguns for their mother goddess. Beyond the settlements built in honeycomb-like grooves covering the monument, the Sangun have built a series of catacombs through which they task their warriors with trials to determine their ranks in society. It's said that only Sangun that ventured into the depths of the tomb to offer their prayers to Honyeo's heart possesses the right to lead all of her children. Only a handful of warriors have accomplished this task, with many more frauds pretending the feat caught. Until such a leader steps up, the Sangun govern through a series of community leaders that meet in the Tomb.

3. Yuhwa Province: Originally the site of the kingdom of Gyerim, the most prominent Dwarven clans occupy this region of Danguk. The country's first metallurgical techniques were devised in this land, giving the dwarven clans wealth and prominence. Much of the veins of silver and iron ore have been drained, leaving the clan owners little beyond their ancestral prestige. Leaders in towns like Eunsan still cling to the hope that they will be able to find new sources of ore while others have moved onto agriculture as a means for profit. Enterprising Halfling merchants allied with performers have begun attracting influence away from the conservative Dwarven clans with promises of modernization.

4. Saro Province: Originally the site of the kingdom of Saro. Since Saro adopted Moksaka's religion as their state religion, many temples to Moksaka have been built here to which believers across the country make pilgrimages to. Many Mudang have established mountain communities to venerate the deities that live atop them. Political dissidents and defeated soldiers also retreated higher up the mountains, abandoning their lives and becoming monks or priests in return for safety.

Most elven tribes reside in the vast forests of the Saro Province. They keep isolated in glades protected by illusory magic, practicing their primal arts away from modernizing influences. They also ally with Noru tribes that serve as the gods' direct messengers in exchange for trading information concerning the heavens and the earth.

Though no major cities exist in this region, the mountains are rumored to hold rifts that lead into the elemental planes. Mountain gods protected these rifts since before the Founding Era to prevent powerful elementals from appearing in and terraforming Danguk. This odd characteristic maintains that the Saro Province still possesses mystical secrets that even the scholars of Asadal still research.

5. Garam Province: Originally the site of the kingdom of Garam, the region houses Nampung, Danguk's major port city which also houses its navy. Travelers and merchants that visit by sea enter through Nampung, which makes it a popular destination for bards and artists to learn more about cultures from the outside world. Even villagers surrounding Nampung who live as rice farmers tend to be more knowledgeable about the world.

Because the rest of Danguk is protected by mountains, most pirate activity non-reliant on airships or teleportation circles occur through Nampung's black markets and neighboring islands. Gumiho found it easiest to disguise oneself in the Garam Province and carved out new lives and identities for themselves. Beyond its naval base and value for trade and travel, uptight Luminists see this region as a gap through which iniquity and corruption spread.

6. Mudo: Mu Island serves as a trading post a hundred miles away from Danguk shores. It's jointly operated with envoys from the Kyougen Federation to facilitate trade and good will between lands. Though tensions linger due to Youseki and the Kojima Chains' invasion of Danguk at the start of the Age of Illumination, diplomats worked diligently to reach an understanding.

7. Asadal: The City of the Gods that sits atop the divinely gifted Sandalwood Tree, Asadal is commonly known as the seat of power in Danguk. All of Danguk's magical research and technology concentrated at its center in Asadal since the Age of Illumination began. The city houses the country's major universities and governmental ministries that oversee all aspects of life for inhabitants. The Lunarian Conclave's embassy, which regulates travel between the planet and the moons through systems of teleportation circles, is also located in the municipal district of Asadal. Other countries such as Long Xin and the Kyougen Federation built their embassies in Asadal.

Though only the wealthiest and most powerful of Danguk's citizens live in the city of Asadal, some druidic orders and commoners live inside of its bark or between its roots in towns where it is sanctioned. Higher taxes are levied from these people than elsewhere in the country.

The king must first forge a pact with the gods of Gucheon and be ordained as their representative on earth. Through the authority granted as the gods' envoy, the king performs a yearly ritual to bless the system of reincarnation of the Sandalwood Tree and the souls that cycle through its roots and branches into and from different planes of existence.

8. Tamla: The island of Tamla was formed when the Ungnyeo, drawn during her bout wrestling against Hwanung, spilled her blood. Years later, a priestess of the Primordial Beasts left to inspect the island as a pilgrimage and found a box waiting for her on the shores. When she opened it, enough livestock to raise in a farm and mountains of grain and bamboo seeds appeared. Finally, she received a revelation of the Primordial Beasts leaving the lands of their own volition and the calamities of undead grudges raining down on Danguk.

She invited her acolytes to help build the land and protect them from the Emperor of Darkness's advent, gathering the primal powers of the Primordial Beasts into a spatial rift that makes the island unreachable physically. Tamla holds firm to the veneration of the Primordial Beasts. Its Mudang discovered the secrets of accessing the demiplane of Beast Danguk, keeping the gate open which transformed the island into an eternal, tropical summer.

Over the course of the Fractured Era, Tamla resisted the kingdoms of the mainland to annex it. Goryeo, however, forced its military into Tamla to annex it through an arrangement with the southern Yongwang. Despite annexation, powerful resistance movements grew to oppose ambassadors from Goryeo. In the Age of Illumination, Tamla maintains a degree of independence from Asadal as they have shown no interest in conforming to the principles of Luminism. Asadal allows Tamla self-governance despite being legally part of Danguk, remembering their fierce resistance. Tamla is the only land in Danguk still governed by Mudang and priests of the Primordial Beasts, though they are neutral from the mainland Black Bear Clan organization. Its priests hold that in time, the Beasts will return to the world and they await their advent.

Alex Ahad

Christopher Humphries "CeeHaz"

DOKKAEBI

If mortals never existed, neither could the first Dokkaebi be born into the world. Native to the land of Danguk, Dokkaebi are fey, the lowest-ranked of the natural gods, who are given shape through the innate energies flowing through nature and given will and personality by the unvarnished desires of people around them. Though they take on goblinesque forms, their true body is either an abandoned, man-made object or something found in nature. They enjoy nothing more than a good drink, a wrestling match, and throwing festivals in the night, which villagers attribute any strange, inexplicable phenomena to. Though fickle and rambunctious, they carry a strong sense of right and wrong and pay back both favors and insults tenfold.

Dokkaebi Traits

Ability Score Increase: Increase one ability score by 2 and another by 1. One should be Strength.

Type: You are a Fey.

Age: Dokkaebi are born in adulthood and live up to 1000 years.

Alignment: Dokkaebi are typically Chaotic creatures who follow their passions and whims even when they may be considered unwise.

Size: The size of Dokkaebi can vary from 4 ft to 8 ft tall. Your size is Small or Medium.

Speed: Your base walking speed is 30 ft.

Darkvision. You can see in dim light within 60 feet of you as if it were bright light, and in darkness as if it were dim light. You can't discern color in darkness, only shades of gray.

Gift of the Elements. You embody the qualities of the spirits of the elements that gave birth to you. When you create your character, choose a listed element and gain its benefits:

- ***Air:*** You gain Resistance to Lightning damage.
- ***Earth:*** You gain Resistance to Poison damage.
- ***Fire:*** You gain Resistance to Fire damage.
- ***Metal:*** You gain Resistance to Piercing damage.
- ***Water:*** You gain Resistance to Acid damage.
- ***Wood:*** You gain Resistance to Radiant damage.

When you damage a creature with an attack or spell while you're grappling them, you can cause the attack or spell to deal extra damage of the damage type you are resistant to against the creature. The extra damage equals your level. Once you use this trait, you can't use it until you finish a short or long rest.

Object Form. As an action, you can change your appearance into a Tiny, non-magical object that you choose at the start of character creation. In this form, your Statistics become those of the object except for your Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma scores. You have Tremorsense for up to 10 ft. You assume the Hit Points of the object and if you drop to 0 Hit Points, any excess damage is carried over to your normal form. You may use a Bonus Action to transform back.

If you die, you return to this form until your soul is bound to your vessel again using an effect or spell to restore you to life. If the object is destroyed, then you can only return through True Resurrection.

Wrestling Champion. You gain proficiency in Athletics and you can add your proficiency bonus again when attempting to grapple another creature. You can grapple a creature up to Huge, ignoring normal size restrictions. If your size has been increased by an effect, you can grapple up to Gargantuan creatures.

Languages: You can speak, read, and write Common and Sylvan.

Kem Mackey

GUMIHO

When a fox lives for over a hundred years, it grows a new tail that symbolizes its accumulated wisdom. If one grows its ninth tail, it transcends the state of ordinary beasthood and achieves sentience, able to perceive the world with greater understanding. They go by different names based on regions: Kitsune, Huli Jing, and the Gumiho.

The Gumiho are nine-tailed foxes native to Danguk, each having accepted their magical gifts from the Primordial Fox, the first Gumiho. They live balancing their higher consciousness with their bestial instincts: combined, both compel Gumiho with an ancient urge to pursue their next stage of evolution, whether by collecting knowledge or mastering their enhanced physical prowess. In this way, they harness their hunger into the power to achieve their desires.

Gumiho rarely gather into large tribes or stay in one place. As shapeshifters, they often live solitary lives among other settlements of people, assimilating where few are any the wiser. Whatever life they choose to lead, few rarely ever find themselves content with stagnation, seeking in their own ways the next stage of their evolution.

Gumiho Traits

Ability Score Increase: Your Charisma increases by 2.

Age: Gumiho begin at maturity when a fox spirit lived over 900 years. They may pass on should they accept death.

Creature Type: You are a Beast.

Alignment: Gumiho are usually Neutral, driven strongly by the object of their hunger. They're able to express a degree of self-discipline and restraint taking into consideration the bigger picture.

Size: You are Medium.

Speed: Your walking speed is 30 ft.

Darkvision: You're accustomed to skulking in darkness beyond the gaze of common people. You can see in dim light within 60 feet of you as if it were bright light, and in darkness as if it were dim light. You can't discern color in darkness, only shades of gray.

Fox's Jaws: You have sharp fangs that can rip apart creatures' flesh. Your jaws are natural weapons, which you can use to make unarmed strikes with the finesse

property. If you hit with them, you deal piercing damage equal to 1d4 + your Strength or Dexterity modifier, instead of the bludgeoning damage normal for an unarmed strike.

Trickster Fox: As an action, you can change your form into an alternate form. You can either take the form of a tiny Fox or take the form of a Medium-sized Humanoid with fox traits such as nine tails. Your Humanoid form is set and you cannot use this trait to duplicate another person's form, though you can choose to hide any of your fox traits. Your clothing and equipment aren't changed by this trait and you can remain in the form until you die. While in fox form, you lose access to your class features and spellcasting. You have proficiency in the Deception skill.

Languages: You can speak, read, and write Common and one other language of your choice.

Knowledge Eater

Ability Score Increase: You can increase your Intelligence or Wisdom by 1.

Fox Marble: You possess a tiny, spherical gemstone containing your spirit inside. This gemstone can function as your spellcasting focus.

When a creature with at least 10 in Intelligence dies within 10 ft. of you, you can spend a Reaction to temporarily snatch their soul inside your Fox Marble. You can ask the soul a question and receive a telepathic answer. The answer must only be a sentence long and might be cryptic, but the soul must answer truthfully. After answering or at the end of your turn, the soul is released.

If your gemstone is lost or destroyed, you must spend a long rest to create another. The gemstone does not function for anybody except you and cannot be sold.

Death Defiance: When you are reduced to 0 Hit Points, you can spend any remaining Hit Dice and regain a number of Hit Points equal to the roll plus your Constitution modifier. Your gemstone shatters and must be repaired to use this feature again.

Liver Eater

Ability Score Increase: You can increase your Strength or Dexterity by 1.

Carnivorous Curse: Your bite enables you to drain another creature's energy, seizing it for yourself or debilitating them into submission. When you hit a creature that isn't either Undead or a Construct with your jaws attack, you choose one of the following effects:

You regain hit points equal to the piercing damage dealt by the bite.

The target has Disadvantage on its next attack roll against you.

Feral Footwork: Your movement speed increases by an additional 5 ft. and you have Proficiency in Intimidation.

Blazemalefica

JANGSEUNG

To a beleaguered traveler, the sight of carved stone and wood is a blessing. The clusters of guardian poles or Jangseung, serve as both guides and protectors. Along roads, they stand as markers of distance between long stretches of land, their roots radiating divine energy into earth to stem corruption and provide respite to those nearby. Placed in the furthest four corners of a settlement, they serve as gatekeepers and drive away evil spirits, disease, and ill fortune. In return, villagers host yearly rituals involving offerings of wine and food, keep them clean, and provide ample prayers.

Although every Jangseung has the ability to be brought to life, the majority of these guardian poles will never move from their chosen posts. They silently watch over the village that created them, serving as the eyes and ears of the deity carved into their poles. In rare, often dire circumstances, a deity will choose to imbue one of the Jangseung with life. This process requires the creation of a new celestial soul, which is then merged with the wood or stone of the original guardian post. A mudang is then called to provide and bless additional materials that are used to form a new, more mobile body.

These new guardians are intricately built and often decorated with knot-work or paper charms. Some Jangseung choose to wear clothing but others forgo it, instead carving prayers, artwork of their deeds, or the faces of their original cluster onto their bare bodies. While their original faces often had exaggerated features, many choose to soften them into something more humanoid-like in order to better fit in with mortals or disguise themselves as warforged. The one feature they cannot hide is their elongated, sharp canine teeth.

Jangseung Traits

Ability Score Increase: Increase one ability score by 2 and another by 1.

Age: The celestial spirit chosen to inhabit the Jangseung is created at the moment of the

Jangseung's awakening and while this spirit can be killed, it does not age. Spirits typically stay with their guardian pole until their deity recalls them, with missions ranging from days long to decades long. A rare few choose to stay permanently on the material plane, petitioning their deity to indefinitely extend their missions.

Creature Type: You are a Humanoid.

Alignment: A Jangseung's alignment almost always mirrors that of its deity. As most villages choose good or neutral aligned deities as their patrons, the majority of Jangseung are seen as honorable, oath-bound protectors. However, a Janseung whose sacred grounds have been desecrated or destroyed, may find themselves corrupted by thoughts of revenge.

Size: Choose between Medium or Small.

Speed: Your base walking speed is 30 ft.

Rite of Consecration: To gain the benefits of a long rest, Jangseung must perform a Rite of Consecration. You require small offerings such as herbs, flowers or food to perform this ritual and must offer them to your patron deity, before kneeling in prayer for the duration of six hours. During this rite, you are motionless and appear inactive but not unconscious, allowing you to see and hear normally.

Hallowed Guardian: As an action, you can choose up to a number of creatures equal to your proficiency bonus that you can see. These creatures receive 1d4 temporary hit points and advantage on saving throws against being Charmed or Frightened for one minute. Once you use this trait, you can't use it again until you finish a long rest.

Resilient Servant: Your ethereal nature gives you the following benefits:

- You do not breathe.
- You do not require food or drink.
- You do not require sleep and magic cannot be used to put you to sleep.
- You are immune to disease and have resistance to non-magical poisons.
- You have advantage on saving throws against being Charmed or Frightened by Fiends, Undead, or Fey.
- You have resistance to radiant damage.

Languages: You can speak, read, and write Common and Celestial. If you are evil aligned, speak with your DM about replacing Celestial with Infernal or Abyssal.

Celestial Spirit

At 1st level, choose one of the spirit options below. These represent the different forms a spirit might manifest as in order to best complete its heavenly mission. Those who wish to protect what remains of their villages or roadways or prevent a disaster typically become Spirits of Protection. Whereas those whose missions are more convert or are seeking to avenge a destroyed home, often become Spirits of Justice.

Spirit of Protection

Form of Wall: You can firmly plant yourself into the ground as an Action. While in this state, your speed is reduced to 0 ft., your Armor Class increases by 2, you suffer Disadvantage on Dexterity saving throws, and creatures have Disadvantage on checks to shove or move or force their way through you regardless of size differences. You can use a Bonus Action to remove yourself from the earth.

Armored Vessel: You gain proficiency with your choice of mason's tools or carpenter's tools. Wearing armor grants you no benefit, but you can apply a shield's bonus as normal and your heavily reinforced body gives you a base AC of 17 (your Dexterity modifier doesn't affect this number).

Spirit of Justice

Assimilate Weapon: As a bonus action, you can assimilate the shape of any weapon you're holding into your arms. You can change out the weapon's damage type to bludgeoning. In addition, your attacks with that weapon deal an additional 1d4 bludgeoning damage.

Agile Vessel: You gain proficiency with your choice of mason's tools or carpenter's tools. Your sculpted body gives you a base AC of 13 + your Dexterity modifier. You gain no benefit from wearing armor, but if you are using a shield, you can apply the shield's bonus as normal.

Alana Fan

LUNAMORPH

Travelers of the stars and denizens of the moons, the dream of Lunamorphs is to travel all corners of the galaxies and map out the entire universe. They've mastered space faring before others who live on the planet that they orbit have even discovered their existence. Inquisitive, individualistic, though reclusive, many Lunamorphs are artists, scientists, and travelers who prefer to be discreet in their visitations in other communities. Regardless, they value trust and companionship as their highest virtues.

Influenced by their limited lifespans, Lunamorph culture encourages relationships with multiple partners. Lunamorphs typically find partners within and outside of their genders and those that become parents, though they have a protective streak, encourage self-sufficiency. They raise one another as a tribe and keep close-knit relationships until ready to step outside. One key skill elders pass on to young rabbits is the art of pounding rice cakes which has resulted in many of the craters on the moon.

Lunamorphs that have lived closer to the respective Moon they're from possess more rabbit-like features. Those born from partners with different races mostly take on qualities from their non-Lunamorph parent. They're well regarded in Danguk for their ingenuity and masterful techniques in pounding rice cakes.

Lunamorph Traits

Ability Score Increase: Your Dexterity increases by 2.

Age: Lunamorphs reach maturity by age 10 and don't usually live longer than 50 years.

Alignment: Most Lunamorphs are degrees of Neutral, valuing self-preservation and the safety of kin at first. They can deviate from this if they find motivation outside of their communities.

Size: Lunamorphs are usually between 3 and 4 feet tall and weigh between 40 and 50 pounds. Creatures who have at least one Lunamorph parent resemble their other parent while gaining Lunamorph features. You can start either Small or Medium.

Speed: Your base walking speed is 30 feet.

Keen Hearing: Your long ears are sensitive to the slightest sounds and you have Advantage on Wisdom (Perception), Wisdom (Survival), and Intelligence (Investigation) checks that involve hearing.

Reflexive Dodge: When you take damage, as a Reaction, your instincts override your consciousness and propels your body out of danger. You reduce the damage by 5 + your level and move 5 ft away from the source of damage without taking an Attack of Opportunity. Once you use this trait, you can't use it again until you finish a short or long rest.

Languages: You can speak, read, and write Common and Lunamorph.

Starwatcher

Ability Score Increase: Your Intelligence score increases by 1.

Astromancer Initiate: You gain proficiency with artisan tools (Cartographer's Supplies). You can spend a long rest to perform a ritual to summon a Tiny Starchild (AC 5, 1 Hit Point).

As an Action, you can command it to project bright light in a 20 ft radius and dim light for an additional 20 ft, or go dark. The Starchild has a Fly (Hover) speed of 20 ft and can move within 10 ft of you. As an action, you can command the Starchild to burst into bright light. Creatures within 5 ft of it must succeed on a Dexterity saving throw (DC 8 + your proficiency bonus + your Intelligence modifier), or be blinded until the end of your turn.

Starry Insight: You know the Guidance cantrip. When you reach 3rd level, you can cast the Identify spell once with this trait and regain the ability to do so when you finish a long rest. At 5th level, you can cast the Locate Object spell once with this trait and regain the ability to do so when you finish a long rest. Intelligence is your Spellcasting Ability for these spells.

Voyager

Ability Score Increase: Your Wisdom score increases by 1.

Navigator of the Stars: You've been trained to chart the heavens and the earth. You gain proficiency with artisan tools (Navigator's Tools).

In addition, you can cast the Augury spell with this trait. Once you cast this spell with this trait, you can't cast that spell again until you finish a Long Rest. Wisdom is your Spellcasting Ability for this spell.

Escape Artist: You've learned how to survive encounters with predators by escaping their clutches. If you fail your ability check to escape from being Grappled or Restrained, you escape, but you can only move up to half your movement speed on this turn.

NORU

The Noru are a deer-like people native to Danguk who claim to have descended alongside Hwanung from the Heavens to found the country. From the perspective of other cultures, the Noru, like the Elves, have descended from the Fey and helped protect and shape the country's landscape. Most Noru clans tend to live in the wilds, maintaining neutrality with the affairs of man as they perceive their duties to impart rather than intervene. Individual Noru however have been more favorable to certain groups or people with their prophecies. Because of this, while Danguk superstition holds that to harm a Noru incurs the gods' wrath, there are those that distrust them for a history of rumored, clandestine activities.

Their connection to nature and the gods have resulted in many walking the paths of either Druids or Clerics. Many serve as natural Mudang, intervening in conflicts between the material and the spiritual. Being able to hear the voices of those beyond trains many Noru youths to be sensitive and sociable. Still, because of their reclusive ways, they are taught by elders to be cheerful, but show their hearts only partially lest they risk being swept into others' designs. To protect themselves, Noru society often follows a strict hierarchy where everyone must know who to listen to and who to guide. Some have opted to eschew these traditionalist practices and venture on their own into conventional society.

Noru Traits

Ability Score Increase: Increase one score by 2 and another by 1 or increase three different scores by 1, but one choice must be Wisdom

Age: Noru live for only up to 60 years, but they do not believe anyone who dies is ever truly gone. They're considered young until they reach the age of 10.

Creature Type: Fey

Alignment: Noru have been raised to be Lawful, but are often Neutral.

Speed: Your base walking Speed is 30 ft.

Divine Knowledge: You have proficiency in either the Nature or Religion skill.

Messenger of the Spirits: You gain the ability to imbue a corpse with speech and ask it as many

NapaL (Min-hee Kim)

questions up to your proficiency bonus. The corpse only knows what it knew in life and is under no compulsion to answer your question honestly. You regain all expended uses when you finish a long rest.

Revelation: When a creature within 30 ft. fails on an Intelligence, Wisdom, or Charisma saving throw, you can use your reaction to roll instead and use that as the final result, potentially turning the failure into a success. You can use this ability once per day.

Seismic Sensitivity: You are sensitive to vibrations in the ground and can automatically pinpoint the location of anything moving while on ground. You gain Tremorsense 30 ft.

Languages: You can speak, read, and write Common and Celestial.

Jeong Kim

SANGUN

The Sangun, or the Lords of the Mountain, are a folk who structure their lives around their strong sense of duty. They are humanoids shaped as tigers whose ancestry can be traced back to the Primordial Tiger, a figure in Danguk's founding venerated as a divine beast in legends. This connection is proven through the divine energy that transforms some Sangun through their determination as a living avatar of their convictions. Undisputed masters of the frigid country of Hodamguk, the Land of Tiger Tales, they regard themselves as guardians of the weak, regarding most outside of their clans to be so until proven otherwise.

Though territorial, they also have an unmatched cunning as they strike only when victories are certain. Deeply spiritual, Sangun faith believes that people are shards of the Primordial Tiger's collective unconsciousness and regard the experiences of one person as a continuation of a grander project.

Sangun Traits

Ability Score Increase: Your Strength score increases by 2.

Age: Sangun mature at the same rate as humans, but they're considered young until they reach the age of 30. Sangun typically live for about 250 years.

Alignment: Most Sangun are Lawful, but may diverge regarding their interpretations of following their principles. They tend toward Neutral.

Size: The Sangun stand between 6 and 7 feet tall and weigh between 250 to 320 pounds. Your size is Medium.

Speed: Your base walking Speed is 30 feet and your claws give you a Climb speed of 10 ft.

Darkvision: Your keen, feline senses enable you to see in dark and dim conditions. You can see in dim light within 60 ft of you as if it were bright light, and in darkness as if it were dim light. You can't discern color in darkness, only shades of gray.

Pounce: If you move at least 15 ft. straight toward a creature and hit them with a melee attack, that target must make a Strength saving throw (DC 8 + your proficiency bonus + your Strength modifier) or be knocked prone.

Thick Fur: You have resistance to cold damage.

Tiger's Claws: Your claws are natural weapons which you can use to make unarmed strikes. They deal slashing damage equal to 1d6 + your Strength modifier, instead of bludgeoning damage for an unarmed strike.

Languages: You can speak, read, and write Common and Primordial.

Lord Guardian

Ability Score Increase: Your Constitution score increases by 1.

Will of the Protector: Starting at 3rd level, you can use an action to materialize your conviction to guard those you hold dear as golden fur and shining stripes. You can use this up to a number of times equal to your Proficiency bonus per long rest.

- Your transformation lasts for 1 minute or until you end it (no action required). You gain Advantage on all saving throws against magical effects. As a reaction, when an ally within 10 ft. of you takes damage, you can give resistance to the damage while taking the same amount of damage.

In addition, you can deal radiant damage equal to your level with the first melee or spell attack that hits an enemy for the first time on each of your turns.

Lord of Beasts

Ability Score Increase: Your Wisdom score increases by 1.

Will of the Primordial: Starting at 3rd level, you can use an action to surrender yourself to your primal instincts as your physical features match that of your divine beast ancestor. You can use this up to a number of times equal to your Proficiency bonus per long rest.

- Your transformation lasts for 1 minute or until you end it (no action required). When you activate this transformation, other creatures within 10 ft of you must make a Dexterity saving throw (DC 8 + your proficiency bonus + your Wisdom modifier) or take fire damage half your level (rounded up) and ignite. Until a creature takes an action to douse the fire, the target takes the same damage at the start of their turns.

In addition, you can deal fire damage equal to your level with the first melee or spell attack that hits an enemy for the first time on each of your turns.

Lord of War

Ability Score Increase: Your Charisma score increases by 1.

Will of the Conqueror: Starting at 3rd level, you can use an action to roar out and gather the spirits of fallen warriors into your body to exact your collective dreams for victory. You can use this up to a number of times equal to your Proficiency bonus per long rest.

- Your transformation lasts for 1 minute or until you end it (no action required). As a bonus action, you may target a creature. They must roll a Wisdom saving throw (DC 8 + your proficiency bonus + your Charisma modifier) or be Cursed until the end of their next turn. While Cursed, the creature cannot take reactions and has Disadvantage on ability checks and saving throws.

In addition, you can deal necrotic damage equal to your level with the first melee or spell attack that hits an enemy for the first time on each of your turns. A creature that succeeds on this saving throw cannot be targeted by this for 24 hours.

SUBCLASSES

Alex Ahad

BARBARIAN: PATH OF THE UNBOUND

In the history of mortals, the strong have shackled the weak and forced them to do their bidding. When they take everything from you, all you know is anger. The collective agonies of the oppressed gather into a single vessel that carries their pain and rage: the Unbound Barbarian. The arrogance of the mighty boils your blood and you temper the pain of their whip into an unstoppable blade of rebellion. Your rage will not stop until all people are free.

Blade of Rebellion

At 3rd level, you push beyond all limits of your mortal body to muster greater strength. While raging, once on each of your turns, when you hit a creature with a melee weapon attack, you can roll a number of d6's up to your Proficiency bonus and deal additional force damage. You take 2 damage for each dice rolled in this way.

When you reach certain levels in this class, the size of your Blade of Rebellion die increases: d8 at 6th level, d10 at 10th level, and d12 at 14th level.

Revolutionary Spirit

At 3rd level, when you first enter your rage, your current and maximum Hit Points increase by your Barbarian level + your Constitution modifier. You lose all Hit Points you've gained from this feature when your Rage ends.

Unstoppable

At 6th level, no chain or bondage can hold you for long. While raging, you are unaffected by difficult terrain and are immune to the Paralyzed and Stunned conditions. You may spend 5 feet of movement to escape being grappled or Restrained.

Galvanized Emancipation

At 10th level, the example you set gives others courage to press forward beyond their limits. While you're raging, each allied creature within 30 ft. gains Advantage on checks or saving throws against charms and effects that would forcefully move them or restrict their movement.

When the affected creature succeeds on such checks or saving throws, the hostile creature takes psychic damage equal to damage dealt by your Blade of Rebellion die plus your Constitution modifier.

Liberator's Battlecry

Beginning at 14th level, whenever you use Reckless Attack, you can roll a number of damage dice equal to half of your Proficiency Bonus (rounded down) for Blade of Rebellion without taking additional damage.

In addition, you can bellow out a cry that inspires you and your companions into sharing your fight for a freer world. As a bonus action while you rage, your yell bolsters the resolve of up to ten creatures of your choice and shakes the convictions of hostile creatures that can hear you within 30 ft. Targeted allies gain 10 ft. to their movement speed and temporary Hit Points equal to your Barbarian level. The movement speed of hostile creatures within range is halved unless the targeted creature is immune to the Frightened condition. These effects last until the end of your rage and you can only use this action once per rage.

Mychal Amann

MLarty

BARD: COLLEGE OF INK

If the spoken word contains power, then the written word is its crystallization. Bards of the College of Ink use ink to elevate the science of inscribing arcane power into parchment to an art. The most advanced of these bards breathe life into their brushstrokes to rise from their pages. These bards often come to be venerated as legendary painters or as creators whose art literally shapes countries and creates monsters. Their craft exemplifies the life that exists in tomes and paintings.

Virtuoso's Inkbrush

When you join the College of Ink at 3rd level, you gain proficiency with Calligrapher's Supplies, the Forgery Kit, and Painter's Supplies.

In addition, as a bonus action, you can magically create a Virtuoso's Inkbrush. This magic item can only be used by you and has the following properties:

- The Inkbrush is a Tiny magic item. It produces ink in your choice of color. You can use it to inscribe brushstrokes against the air, not just flat, physical surfaces.
- As a bonus action, the Inkbrush can grow or shrink by one size category. You can use it as a melee weapon with the following stats:

Virtuoso's Inkbrush

Melee weapon (Simple, Brush)
Category: Magic Item
Damage: 1d4
Damage Type: Bludgeoning, Piercing, or Slashing of your choice
Properties: Finesse, Light, Range
Range: 20/60
Weight: 1 lb

- You can cast Silent Image at will using this item as a spellcasting focus.
- Only one Virtuoso's Inkbrush created by you can exist at a time. If you create another while one already exists, the previous one you've created disappears.

Living Inkpiece

Medium or Smaller Ooze

Armor Class 10
Hit Points 10 + four times your Bard level
Speed 25 ft

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	10 (+0)	14 (+2)	8 (-1)	10 (+0)	14 (+2)

Damage Immunities: Acid
Condition Immunities: Charmed, Frightened, Grappled, Prone, Restrained
Senses: Darkvision 60 ft., Passive Perception 10
Languages: Understands the languages you speak
Challenge: -
Proficiency Bonus: equals your bonus

Amorphous: The Inkpiece can move through a space as narrow as 1 inch wide without squeezing.

Hyperrealism: The Inkpiece depicts its subject with great accuracy. Whenever a creature rolls Intelligence (Investigation) to try and discern its true nature, it must beat your spell save DC. On a success, it can see its true nature as an Ooze.

Actions

Ink Slam: Melee Weapon Attack: your spell attack modifier to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. Hit: 1d8 + Proficiency Bonus acid damage. On a hit, the creature must roll an Acrobatics or Athletics check against your spell save DC. On a failure, they are Grappled and may spend an action on its next turn to try and escape.

Animate Inkpiece

With a final brushstroke, you imbue your ink piece with sentience at 3rd level. As an action, you summon a Living Inkpiece in an unoccupied space that you can see within 30 ft of you.

You determine the Inkpiece's appearance. It is friendly to you and your companions and obeys your commands. The creature's game statistics are listed below.

In combat, the Inkpiece shares your initiative count, but it takes its turn immediately after yours. It obeys your verbal commands (no action required by you). If you don't issue any, it takes the Dodge action and uses its move to avoid danger. You can expend one use of Bardic Inspiration to restore your Inkpiece's hit points for an amount equal to your Charisma modifier (minimum one) plus twice your bardic inspiration die. If you are incapacitated, the Inkpiece can take any action of its choosing.

The Inkpiece remains for 1 hour or until it is reduced to 0 Hit Points, you use this feature to create another Inkpiece, or until you die; after which, it evaporates.

Once you use this feature, you can't use it again until you finish a Long Rest, or until you expend two Bardic Inspiration dice.

Ink Spell

By 6th level, you can cast spells through your Living Inkpiece as though you were in the inkpiece's space. You can ignore the verbal components of the spell and have the Inkpiece perform the somatic components as an extension of yourself.

In addition, when you create your Living Inkpiece, you can create it with half its original Hit Points (rounded up) while a protective layer of ink surrounds you, giving you temporary hit points equal to its current Hit Points. If an adjacent creature makes a melee attack against you while you still have temporary hit points in this way, they take acid damage equal to your Charisma modifier.

Page Master

Starting at 14th level, once per long rest after you finish a long rest, you can inscribe a rune on a parchment to store in it a spell you know of up to 5th level. You do not expend the spell slot to inscribe it. The rune is usable only by you and you must use the specified casting time of the spell in order to cast it. Only a single spell rune you create can exist at a time. The rune deteriorates and is unusable within 24 hours.

In addition, you may cast spells that require being inscribed such as Glyph of Warding, Magic Circle, or Symbol with half the cost in material components.

Christopher Humphries "CeeHaz"

CLERIC: HEARTH DOMAIN

The law of hospitality mandates that all guests and travelers be welcomed no matter their creed or background. Clerics of Hearth live these virtues to create safe havens from the prejudices of their conflict-ridden world. They maintain their homes and inns as temples for gods like Jowangshin, welcoming the weary and feeding the hungry. Should anyone undermine or take advantage of their generosity, their bodies must serve as kindling for the fireplace. By the light of the hearth, those that serve the gods of this domain ignite the beacon that all who seek compassion and redemption can follow.

Hearth Domain Spells

Cleric Level	Spells
1st	Alarm, Sleep
3rd	Calm Emotions, Flaming Sphere
5th	Create Food and Water, Fireball
7th	Fire Shield, Private Sanctum
9th	Animate Objects, Hallow

Kitchen God's Blessing

When you choose this domain at 1st Level, you gain the Produce Flame cantrip if you don't already know it. In addition, you gain proficiency for Cook's Utensils.

Your proficiency bonus is doubled for any ability check you make that uses this tool.

Channel Divinity: Law of Hospitality

Starting at 2nd level, you can use your Channel Divinity to materialize the divine right of the guest and divine duty of the host.

As an action, you present your holy symbol, and a sphere conjuring all the warmth and memories of comrades sitting before the hearth centers around

you. The sphere has a 30 ft radius, warding those within it and lighting the area with dim light. The sphere moves with you and lasts for 1 minute until you are incapacitated or die.

While in the sphere, any creature who targets the warded creature with an attack or a harmful spell must first make a Wisdom saving throw. On a failed save, the creature must choose a new target that isn't similarly warded or lose the attack or spell.

If the warded creature makes an attack, casts a spell that affects an enemy creature, or leaves the sphere, they lose this protection until Law of Hospitality is newly channeled. This feature doesn't protect the warded creatures from area Effects such as the explosion of a Fireball. If you take any hostile action, the sphere dissipates early.

Meal of a Lifetime

At 6th level, your culinary abilities evolve at such a rate, your meals bring people divine inspiration. As part of a short or long rest, you prepare a meal for up to six creatures. Spells that create food, such as Create Food and Water or Heroes' Feast, gain the benefit of Meal of a Lifetime in addition to any other effects if they are cast while using this ability. Each creature that partakes in your meal gains temporary hit points equal to your Cleric level + your Wisdom modifier.

In addition, once per long rest when you make a meal by making an ability check using a Cook's Utensils and if your result is a two digit number.

Potent Spellcasting

Starting at 8th level, you add your Wisdom modifier to the damage you deal with any cleric cantrip.

Soothe the Wounded Heart

Starting at 17th level, you and friendly creatures spending a short rest together can regain hit dice used for short rests and gain the healing benefits of a long rest early. Targets cannot gain the benefits such as regaining spell slots, the use of any class features, or preparing spells in this way. Once you use this feature, you can't use it again until you finish a long rest.

Alex Ahad

DRUID: CIRCLE OF THE MEDIUM

Mediums believe pestilence to be forms of malevolent spirits, born as results of wicked acts. In accordance with that, removing pestilence alone is insufficient and must be purified and transformed to promote the order of the natural world. To that end, Circle of the Medium Druids use their bodies as receptacles to house these Gwishin, wayward spirits,, enduring possessions to cleanse their malice.

To prevent their minds from being overtaken by their corruptive influence, a guardian spirit grants them its protection. With its help, Mediums weave back these malignant spirits into the natural world, bolstering it or its defenders against further contamination.

Circle Spells

You have bonded to the spirit that first possessed you, giving you great powers over the spiritual. At 2nd level, you have the Protection from Evil and Good spell prepared. It counts as a druid spell for you, and it doesn't count against the number of spells you can have prepared.

At 3rd, 5th, 7th, and 9th level you gain access to the spells listed for that level in the Circle of the Medium Spells table. Once you gain access to one of these spells, you always have it prepared, and it doesn't count against the number of spells you can prepare each day. If you gain access to a spell that doesn't appear on the druid spell list, the spell is nonetheless a druid spell for you.

Circle of the Medium Spells

Druid Level	Spells
2nd	Detect Evil and Good, Protection from Evil and Good
3rd	Augury, Spiritual Weapon
5th	Clairvoyance, Speak With Dead
7th	Banishment, Death Ward
9th	Animate Objects, Dispel Evil and Good

Pestilence Eater

At 2nd level, you can use your body as a receptacle for the diseases and curses that blight the world.

As a Bonus Action, you can choose one creature within 30 ft. and remove a disease or curse or one of the following conditions affecting them: Blinded, Deafened, Paralyzed, or Poisoned. For each disease, curse, or condition removed in this way, you gain a d4 Gwishin die. For each Gwishin die you carry, your current and maximum Hit Points decrease by 2.

You start the day with 1 Gwishin die and you can gain Gwishin dice up to your Proficiency bonus.

When a creature that you can see within 30 ft. makes an ability check, attack roll, or a saving throw, you can use a Reaction to expend a use of one of your Gwishin dice, and roll it to subtract the result from the creature's roll.

Your Gwishin die increases when you reach certain levels in this class. Your Gwishin die increases to 1d6 at 6th level, 1d8 at 10th level, and 1d10 at 14th level.

Heavenly Guardian

At 2nd level, you call forth your guardian spirit to use your body as an arbiter for divine protection. As an action, you can expend a use of your Wild Shape feature and enter into a half-conscious trance. Your appearance changes, matching that of the guardian spirit you're channeling. While this feature is active, you gain the following benefits:

- You gain 5 temporary hit points for each of your Druid levels.
- At the start of your turn, you gain an additional Gwishin die.
- You can roll Constitution saving throws to maintain concentration with Advantage.
- As a bonus action, select a creature besides yourself within 30 ft. of you. You can expend and roll as many Gwishin dice as you have. That creature gains temporary hit points equal to the result of your rolls.

Mychal Amann

Channel Suffering

At 6th level, your ability to channel curses increases. Once per turn, when you roll for damage, you can roll up to as many Gwishin dice as you have and deal additional necrotic damage equal to your result. You do not expend any Gwishin dice this way.

You can use this feature a number of times equal to your Wisdom modifier and you regain all expended uses of it after a long rest.

Master Medium

When you reach 10th level, your body develops the endurance to handle the strain of accepting stronger spirits into it. When you use your Heavenly Guardian feature, you can make an additional weapon attack as part of the Attack action and gain a Flying speed of 30 ft. until the transformation ends.

Redemption of the Polluted Soul

At 14th level, the afflictions you've gathered inside of you are cleansed and ascend into the form of your guardian spirit. If you are reduced to 0 hit points while you have Gwishin dice remaining, you immediately gain the benefits of your Heavenly Guardian feature without expending any of your remaining Wild Shape uses. You must expend and roll any remaining Gwishin dice and you regain a number of hit points equal to your result.

Once you use this feature, you can't use it again until you finish a long rest.

Kaitlin "Charlie" Edlund

FIGHTER: DEADEYE

Though many archers develop clever tactics firing magical or trick arrows, a Deadeye relies on no such gimmicks. They're snipers for whom aim is everything. While they may not hit their mark's vitals each time, their working knowledge of creatures' biological functions serves to ensure each of their shots debilitates their targets.

Hawkeye

Starting at 3rd level, your training with the bow has improved your aim beyond the limits of most warriors. You gain Proficiency with Perception and you add double your Proficiency Bonus to any check used to detect creatures in your surroundings.

In addition, as a Bonus Action, you can mark a creature within 150 ft. You ignore half cover and three-quarters cover against the marked creature and you can declare a Called Shot against them. They continue to be marked until either you or they drop to 0 hit points, you use this feature again, or they maintain full cover from you for at least one minute. You cannot mark a target who you have currently marked.

You can use this feature a number of times equal to your proficiency bonus, and you regain all expended uses of it when you finish a short rest.

Called Shot

At 3rd level, you've become skilled at debilitating your quarry with precise shots against them. When you take the attack action, you can declare a Called Shot against a creature that you've marked with your Hawkeye feature and hit with a ranged weapon attack. On a hit, you deal your attack damage as normal, and the target must make a saving throw with the ability associated with your chosen shot or suffer its additional effects.

Called Shot save DC = 8 + your proficiency bonus + your Strength or Dexterity modifier

Some Called Shot effects can be treated with Wisdom (Medicine) checks or magical healing; if such an effect is treated while the target is still marked, you may use that effect on the target again. Otherwise, you may not use a Called Shot effect on a creature who has failed its saving throw against that effect during the duration of its current mark.

Chest Shot (Constitution): The target takes 1d6 damage at the start of each of its turns due to a bleeding wound. Any creature can take an action to stanch the bleeding with a successful Wisdom (Medicine) check against your Called Shot DC. The wound also closes if the target receives magical healing.

The damage die for Bleeding damage increases to 2d6 at 7th level, 3d6 at 15th level, and 4d6 at 18th level. This shot has no effect against Constructs or Undead creatures.

Hand Shot (Strength): The target drops one item or weapon held in their hand and it falls 5 ft. away
from them.

Head Shot (Consitution): You can roll an additional damage die when determining the damage your target takes. You can roll two additional damage die at 7th level, three at 15th level, and four at 18th level.

Leg Shot (Dexterity): The target's speed is halved and they have Disadvantage on Dexterity saving throws. Any creature can use an action to remove this penalty with a successful Wisdom (Medicine) check against your Called Shot DC. The penalty also ends if the target receives magical healing.

Vital Shot (Constitution): The target is Stunned until the end of your next turn.

The effect names are not requirements; it is possible to inflict any effect on any creature, regardless of the presence of limbs, heads, and so forth.

Peerless Sniper

At 7th level, your range as an archer expands to cover greater distances. Your normal and long ranges for all ranged weapons double, including for melee weapons you can throw.

Piercing Bolt

At 7th level, your ability to detect weak spots of any creature becomes near-supernatural. Any projectile you fire from a ranged weapon counts as magical for the purpose of overcoming resistance and immunity to nonmagical attacks and damage. Your projectiles only count as such when fired and are nonmagical in any other situation.

In addition, as an Action, you can fire a projectile in a line up to as long as your normal range and 5 feet wide. The line must end in a space occupied by a creature. Each creature in the line must roll a Dexterity saving throw against your Called Shot DC. A creature takes damage equal to your weapon's damage plus your Dexterity modifier on a failed saving throw or half as much on a successful one.

Defensive Shot

Starting at 15th level, when a creature you have marked attacks a target other than you, you may use your reaction to make one ranged weapon attack against the marked creature. This attack may be a Called Shot. The attack occurs before the creature makes its attack.

Jumong's Gambit

Starting at 18th level, you can roll your next ranged weapon attack roll after declaring a Called Shot with Disadvantage. On a successful hit, you can roll double your damage dice and the target automatically fails on their saving throw against your
Called Shot effect.

Jeong Kim

Undyin

Jeong Kim

MONK: WAY OF THE DOSA

The Five Agents flows in an eternal cycle, strengthening and transforming into one another and taking on ethereal form in the process. A spiritual monk finds their balance in these flows, then steps into the stream where they will make themselves a part of it. With greater skill comes deeper steps and greater strengths, but also a greater commitment to the flow.

Each of the five elements strengthens one element and is strengthened by another; Each has an associated damage type. As the Dosa flows in harmony from one element to the next, each element strengthens the Dosa in various ways depending on the monk's level.

	Air	Earth	Fire	Metal	Water	Wood
Strengthens	All	Metal	Earth	Water	Wood	Fire
Is Strengthened By	All	Fire	Wood	Earth	Metal	Water
Damage Type	Lightning	Poison	Fire	Bludgeoning, Piercing, or Slashing	Acid	Radiant

First Steps into the Generative Flow

At 3rd level, you find your balance in the harmony of elements and take your first steps in the generative flow. As a Bonus Action, you can spend 1 ki point to enter the Flow of Generation Form for 10 minutes.

When you first enter the Flow of Generation Form, you select an element with which to align your body. At the beginning of your turn, you can move to the element your current element strengthens. When you take the Attack action, you can choose to add one of the following benefits:

- When you hit a creature with an unarmed strike or monk weapon, you deal additional damage equal to one roll of your martial arts die + your wisdom modifier, of the damage type associated with your current element.
- When you hit a creature, you grant the next creature that attacks that creature Advantage on their first attack roll and if they hit, they deal additional damage equal to your martial arts die, of the type associated with your current element.
- You can replace one of your attacks to create a simple object that can fit in a 5 foot cube within 30 feet, made out of your current element. It occupies its space and it maintains its shape for as long as you remain in your Flow of Generation Form, and you can maintain a number of these objects equal to your Wisdom modifier. If you try to create a new object beyond the maximum amount you can create, the earliest one you created dissipates. If the object you create would be harmful to come into contact with, it deals one roll of your martial arts die of its associated damage type.

First Steps into the Overcoming Flow

At 6th level, you gain sufficient poise to begin dabbling in the more dangerous and more destructive overcoming flow.

When you enter Flow of Generation Form, you gain the following additional benefits:

- You gain resistance to the damage type associated with your current element.
- You harness the elements through your punches into focused shots made at great distances. You can make ranged unarmed strikes with a range of 30 ft., dealing damage equal to your martial arts die plus your Wisdom modifier with its damage type being the type associated with your current element.

To Move With It Is To Move It

At 11th level, you enter or accelerate the progression of the cycle in the face of danger. As a Reaction, if you would take damage of a type associated with an element, you can spend 1 Ki Point to align to that element. This activates the Flow of Generation Form if you are not already in it. On your next turn, your attacks deal additional damage equal to your martial arts die of the type associated with your current element.

Submerged in the Flow

Also at 11th level, your mastery of the flow increases. Your forms gain additional effects:

- Also at 11th level, your mastery of the flow increases. Your Flow of Generation form gains the following additional effects:
- As a reaction, you can give another creature within 60 feet the benefit of one of your monk features, based on your current element, until the end of their next turn. These abilities still use your statistics and ki save DC and you must still spend the requisite cost in Ki Points for each monk ability.
    - Air: Evasion
    - Fire: Stunning Strike
    - Earth: Slow Fall
    - Metal: Deflect Missiles
    - Water: Stillness of Mind
    - Wood: Purity of Body (also negates the Potioned condition and any current diseases or poisons the target is afflicted with)
- If a creature is resistant or immune to the damage type associated with your current element, your attack's damage type is instead associated with the element that your element is strengthened by.
- If you hit with both your unarmed attacks against the same target when you use Flurry of Blows, you channel the power of the elements into your target to generate an explosive reaction inside their body. The target must make a Constitution saving throw against your Ki save DC. On a failure, they take damage equal to 5 martial arts dice with the damage type associated with your current element, or half as much on a successful saving throw.

Subsumed in the Flow

At 17th level, your mastery of the elemental cycles is as natural to you as breathing. Once per turn, when you deal damage to a creature while in Flow of Generation Form, you can inflict Vulnerability to the target against the damage type associated with your current element. This Vulnerability lasts until they take that damage for the first time or until the start of your next turn.

MLarty

Alex Ahad

PALADIN - OATH OF THE MYSTICS

In the world the gods created, they've left to mortals Arcana, a means of understanding and manipulating the laws of creation. Paladins who follow the Oath of the Mystics swear to protect arcane knowledge and oversee the applications of magic against its abuse. While they understand that the arcane arts can ease and elevate the lives of the common man, they stand as bulwarks against the greed of sorcerer kings and lich lords that resulted in untold casualties in the past.

The warriors that answer this calling are usually studious guardians that hone both their bodies and minds to understand and protect themselves against these wicked mages. Such paladins can often be found in service of deities of magic or under the employ of arcane universities, charged with protecting their libraries and forbidden vaults. Many swear allegiance to good-aligned dragons to protect their troves full of lost secrets that could devastate the world in fell hands.

Tenets of the Mystics

The tenets of the Oath of the Mystics task paladins to guard the lands against the misuse of magic.

Seek Knowledge. Appreciate the nigh-infinite vastness of the realms and be voracious in learning new information.

Impart Knowledge. Never withhold information from people that cannot be used to harm others or themselves. Be generous with sharing what you've learned from your experiences with people.

Preserve Knowledge. Do not tolerate the destruction or the abuse of information. All knowledge must be preserved and any efforts to destroy or exploit them against the lives of people must be subdued.

Temperance. Steel yourself against the mellifluous voices of wicked creatures that tempt you with power. Might attained by simple means must be paid with an impossible debt.

Oath Spells

You gain oath spells at the paladin levels listed.

Oath of the Mystics Spells

Paladin Level	Spells
3rd	Identify, Magic Missile
5th	Arcane Lock, Detect Thoughts
9th	Counterspell, Lightning Bolt
13th	Dimension Door, Resilient Sphere
17th	Telekinesis, Telepathic Bond

Channel Divinity

When you take this oath at 3rd level, you gain the following two Channel Divinity options.

- **Scholar's Revelation.** You can use your Channel Divinity to open your mind to greater learning. As a bonus action, you grant yourself a +5 bonus on Arcana, Nature, Religion, and History checks for the next 10 minutes. In addition, in this state, you can spend a minute reading to finish an entire book or scroll.
- **Spellsunder.** You can use your Channel Divinity to sever the flow of magic augmenting the wicked. When you hit a creature under the effects a spell with a weapon attack, you can make an ability check using your Charisma modifier and your proficiency bonus against a DC of 10 + the spell's level.

On a success, the effect ends early and the target is Incapacitated until the end of their next turn.

Aura of Spell Turning

Beginning at 7th level, your understanding of the arcane arts hones your aura and allows it to dilute harmful spells. You and friendly creatures within 10 ft of you have Advantage on saving throws against spells. In addition, for each creature that succeeds on their save, the caster (if they are also in the aura) takes 1d6 force damage as the force of their magic reflects back onto them.

At 18th level, the range of this aura increases to 30 ft.

Spatial Cleave

At 15th level, your control over the arcane allows you to cleave through space, opening a temporary rift in dimensions. As a Bonus Action, you can teleport up your movement speed to an unoccupied space you can see.

Governor of Magic

At 20th level, you wield the authority befitting the ultimate arbitrator of magical power.

Using your action, you undergo a transformation. For 1 minute, you gain the following benefits:

- You gain resistance to all damage from spells and magical effects.
- Your weapon channels magical energy that adds an extra damage die on a successful hit. If the target was concentrating on a spell, after taking damage, they automatically drop their concentration.
- When you hit a creature with a melee weapon attack and deal damage to it, you can force it to make a Charisma saving throw against your spell save DC. On a failed save, their attunement to a magic item is severed until they spend another Short Rest attuning to it.

Once you use this feature, you can't use it again until you finish a long rest.

Angela Chong

Alex Ahad

RANGER - EMISSARY OF PARADISE

You've had near death experiences that transported you to the magnificent Flower Fields of Seocheon. Or perhaps, you've been gifted with visions of distant planes where flora of unrivaled beauty bloom far across the horizons. This fateful occurrence gifted you with the natural magic of the celestial planes which you've dedicated to use to expand the paradise you've witnessed. Channeling the beauty of these divine blossoms, you return life to the wastes and shame your foes' actions with their ugliness.

Blessed Harvest

At 3rd level, you channel the life energy of the divine flowers of paradise into your attacks. When you hit a creature with a weapon, you deal 1d4 radiant damage to the target, which can take this extra damage only once per turn.

The extra damage increases to 1d6 when you reach 11th level in this class.

Emissary of Paradise Magic

At 3rd level, you learn an additional spell when you reach certain levels in this class, as shown in the Emissary of Paradise Spells table. Each spell counts as a ranger spell for you, but it doesn't count against the number of ranger spells you know.

Emissary of Paradise Spells

Ranger Level	Spells
3rd	Sanctuary
5th	Mirror Image
9th	Beacon of Hope
13th	Banishment
17th	Mass Cure Wounds

Aspect of Paradise

Through your connection with the flower fields of paradise, you gain a divine aspect representing your link. Choose your aspect from the Aspect of Paradise table or determine it randomly.

d6	Gift
1	Spectral flowers grow from the ground and disappear with each step you take.
2	Your smile radiates with a brief dim light out to a 5 ft. radius and a gentle warmth felt by others.
3	You're wreathed by a raiment made of illusory flowers.
4	Your skin glimmers in the light and you can change its color to match the hue of your favorite flowers.

d6	Gift
5	You faintly smell of honey or a fragrant spice.
6	Minor spirits dance around you while nobody is paying attention.

Language of Flowers

At 3rd level, you learn the Druidcraft cantrip which counts as a Ranger spell for you. You also become proficient in your choice of one of the following skills: Medicine, Nature, or Religion. You also imbue flowers within 15 ft. with limited sentience, giving them the ability to communicate with you. You can ask up to three questions which they answer according to their limited knowledge of their surroundings to the best of their abilities.

Once you use this feature, you can't use it again until you finish a short or long rest.

Photosynthesis

By 7th level, your link with paradise strengthens, granting you the aspects of the flowers blooming in the celestial gardens. You gain Resistance against Radiant damage.

In addition, as a Bonus Action while in dim light, you and any ally within 10 ft. gains 1d4 temporary hit points. This bonus increases to 1d8 while in bright light. Targets do not lose these temporary hit points while in darkness. An ally cannot benefit from Photosynthesis again until they have lost all temporary hit points.

Eternal Gardens

At 11th level, you gain the power to spread the spectral roots of the celestial flower fields through the Plant Growth spell. It doesn't count against the number of Ranger spells you know and you can cast it once per long rest without using a spell slot.

You can cast Plant Growth to target a space that doesn't have any plants. Doing so covers a 30 ft. radius centered on that point with spectral flowers. Designated creatures up to your Wisdom modifier (minimum 1) are not impeded by the difficult terrain of this area. They also gain double the temporary Hit Point bonus of your Photosynthesis feature while in this area.

Gates of Paradise

When you reach 15th level, you are gifted by the celestial planes with a key to your personal paradise. Once per long rest, you gain the ability to cast Demiplane.

In addition, when you make a successful attack against an enemy, you can banish them into your Demiplane, incapacitated, for 1 minute. They must succeed on a Charisma saving throw against your spell DC or be banished. They can repeat their saving throws at the end of their turn. On a success, they reappear in the space they left or in the nearest unoccupied space if that space is occupied.

You can only use this feature a number of times equal to your proficiency bonus, and you regain all expended uses when you finish a long rest.

Ready

Sometimes you want to get the jump on a foe or wait for a particular circumstance before you act. To do so, you can take the Ready action on your turn, which lets you act using your reaction before the start of your next turn.

First, you decide what perceivable circumstance will trigger your reaction. Then, you choose the action you will take in response to that trigger, or you choose to move up to your speed in response to it. Examples include "If the cultist steps on the trapdoor, I'll pull the lever that opens it," and "If the goblin steps next to me, I move away."

When the trigger occurs, you can either take your reaction right after the trigger finishes or ignore the trigger. Remember that you can take only one reaction per round.

When you ready a spell, you cast it as normal but hold its energy, which you release with your reaction when the trigger occurs. To be readied, a spell must have a casting time of 1 action, and holding onto the spell's magic requires concentration. If your concentration is broken, the spell dissipates without taking effect. For example, if you are concentrating on the web spell and ready magic missile, your web spell ends, and if you take damage before you release magic missile with your reaction, your concentration might be broken.

Nidhi Naroth

ROGUE: NARAKA PROSECUTOR

Death comes for all beings without distinction, but malcontents who subvert the cycle of souls exploit this even-handed system. When ordinary psychopomps fail to capture these fugitives, the Narakwangs call in those outside the boundaries of their laws to uphold order. As agents of the Underworld, these rogues hound those that defy the call of death to deliver them their divine punishment.

To accomplish this feat, the Narakwangs unlocked in them the ability to see the ebbs and flows of karmas. They instinctively move alongside the ripples of intent emanating from outlaws and strike first. Being sensitive to the slightest changes in people's wills paves the road toward suspicion for ordinary mortals.

However you attained this power, you have dedicated your life to prosecuting and executing those that would cheat death.

Accuser

Starting at 3rd level, you become proficient in Insight and Intimidation if you aren't already. In addition, you gain expertise with these skills, which means your proficiency bonus is doubled for any ability check you make with them.

Karmic Mediator

At 3rd level, your movements become one with the ripples and waves of karma pressuring the universe. You can use your Cunning Action to take a Ready action. If you deal Sneak Attack damage from a Readied attack, the target takes psychic damage equal to the roll's total in place of the original Sneak Attack damage.

Underworld Arbiter

At 9th level, the number of creatures you've prosecuted has earned the attention of the Ten Narakwang. You're gifted with Resistance against Necrotic damage.

In addition, when you deal Sneak Attack damage, you can force the target to make a Wisdom saving throw (DC 8 + your proficiency bonus + your Charisma modifier). On a failure, the creature becomes Frightened for 1 minute.

A creature can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success. You regain all expended uses when you finish a long rest. You regain a use of this feature (up to a maximum equal to your proficiency bonus) when your attack reduces a Frightened creature's Hit Points to 0.

Hell's Judgment

At 13th level, you've perfected techniques inspired by the punishments doled out by the task masters of the underworld to deliver preemptive, debilitating strikes against foes. When you use your Bonus Action to Ready an Action, you gain the following benefits:

Saving Throws. Your techniques require your target to make a saving throw to resist the technique's effects. The saving throw DC is calculated as follows:

Judgment save DC = 8 + your proficiency bonus + your Charisma modifier

Black-Thread Whip: If you successfully attack a creature for using a Move action, they must attempt a Dexterity saving throw against your Judgment save DC. On a failure, they fall Prone and their speed is reduced to 0 ft. until the end of their turn.

Hand-Crushing Swing: If you successfully attack a creature for making an Attack action, they must make a saving throw with the ability they used to attack against your Judgment save DC. On a failure, they automatically miss and gain Disadvantage on any attack they make until the end of their turn.

Greed-Impaling Thrust: If you successfully attack a creature for Using an Object, they must attempt a Strength or Dexterity saving throw (whichever is higher) against your Judgment save DC. On a failure, they are disarmed and forced to drop the object in an adjacent space.

Tongue-Splitting Strike: If you successfully attack a creature for casting a spell, they attempt a saving throw with their spellcasting ability against your Judgment save DC. On a failure, they cannot speak until the end of their turn. During this duration, the targeted creature cannot cast spells with a verbal component.

You can use this feature a number of times equal to your proficiency bonus, and you regain all expended uses of it when you finish a long rest.

Chthonic Justice

At 17th level, the merciless path you've walked transforms you into one of King Yeomra's living avatars, granting you authority to dole out punishment to any sin. You can take an additional reaction per round that you can only use to take a Readied Action.

If you use your reaction to move, your karma-guided movement does not provoke an opportunity attack.

MLarty

Candlehag

SORCERER: NINE-TAILED SOUL

In another lifetime, you or an ancestor crossed paths with a Gumiho, a shapeshifting, nine-tailed fox whose longevity is owed to accumulating energy eating the hearts and magic of mortals. This energy is crystallized into the terminal for their soul which they craft called the Fox Marble. Though they are often tricksters, a mortal may get the best of them by claiming the marble for themselves. A Gumiho who seeks to renounce their destructive hunger may be fortunate to ally with a sympathetic partner.

The reservoir of magical power they've stockpiled manifest within you as a sorcerer. This power can curse the Nine-Tailed Soul with an unceasing hunger for magical energy, but if tamed, the guile and bestial might of the trickster fox will be at your disposal.

Fox Marble

Starting at 1st level, you can imbue a spherical stone with the essence of your soul as a Fox Marble. You can use it as a spellcasting focus. Additionally, as an action, you can use the Fox Marble to magically transform into the shape of a Fox. The rules for the Druid's Wild Shape apply to your transformation. You can use this feature up to a number of times equal to your Charisma modifier. If you have no uses of this feature remaining, you can spend 1 Sorcery Point to use it. You regain expended uses when you finish a Long Rest.

At 2nd level, at the start of your long rest, you can store up to a number of unused Sorcery Points equal to your Charisma modifier into your Fox Marble. You can tap into your Fox Marble as an additional source for Sorcery Points.

The Fox Marble reverts to an ordinary stone if moved 60 ft away from you. It is a Tiny object with AC 15 and 5 hit points, and it is immune to poison and psychic damage. If the Fox Marble is destroyed or lost, you must spend an hour during a short or long rest to create another. Only one Fox Marble you create may exist at a time.

Nine-Tailed Magic

You learn additional spells when you reach certain levels in this class, as shown on the Nine-Tailed Spells table. Each spell counts as a sorcerer spell for you, but it doesn't count against the number of sorcerer spells you know. These spells can't be replaced when you gain a level in this class.

Sorcerer Level	Spells
1st	Inflict Wounds, Silent Image
3rd	Mirror Image, Moonbeam
5th	Counterspell, Dispel Magic
7th	Confusion, Phantasmal Killer
9th	Mislead, Modify Memory

Steal Magic

Beginning at 6th level, when you cast Counterspell or Dispel Magic and successfully interrupt or end a spell, you gain Sorcery Points equal to the level of that spell (maximum of 5). If you gain a number of Sorcery Points that surpasses the amount you gain at your level, you can store any excess points into your Fox Marble. In addition, as long as you have Sorcery Points remaining, you can use your Reaction to halve magical damage.

Beast of Calamity

Starting at 14th level, you can transform into the shape of the Gumiho whose blood runs through your veins. As a bonus action, you can spend up to 5 sorcery points to transform your body for 1 minute. You gain the following benefits:

- You gain temporary hit points equal to your sorcery points spent + your Sorcerer level.
- Your reach and movement speed increase by 5 ft.
- You grow a set of spectral fox tails. You can use them to make a melee spell attack. On a successful hit, you deal 2d8 bludgeoning damage plus your Charisma modifier in addition to a number of d8's equal to the number of sorcery points spent. Your damage die improves to d10 at 18th level in this class.
- You can cast a cantrip or spell with a range of touch as part of your fox tail attack by spending a number of sorcery points equal to the spell's level (1 sorcery point if the spell is a cantrip). On a hit, the target suffers damage from your fox tail attack and the spell's effects.

Soul Marble

Starting at 18th level, when you die, your Fox Marble captures your soul. While your soul inhabits the Marble, you are aware of your surroundings as if you were in its space. You may project your soul up to 100 ft as an incorporeal shadow. Your incorporeal shadow cannot physically interact with other creatures or objects, though you're able to perceive each other. You may move through objects or creatures.

You gain a new body in a day, regaining all of your Hit Points. Your new body appears within 5 ft of your Fox Marble. If your Fox Marble is destroyed before your new body rejuvenates, your soul is released and you pass on into the afterlife.

Alex Ahad

WARLOCK: JEOSEUNG SAJA PATRON

Your patron is a Jeoseung Saja, a herald that represents the bureaucracy governing the cycle between life and death. They answer to Princess Bari, the Goddess of Passing, who ordered her servants to bring peaceful passage in death. Without compromise, they pursue souls marked for death to the ends of the world without rest.

You may have had a brush with death that put you into contact with a Jeoseung Saja. Through this fateful encounter, you signed a contract and found employment within the underworld bureaucracy. You may have experienced the terror of undeath and decided to fight it through the system you've entered.

Gifted with the Regalia of the Death God, you can mark those destined for death and protect yourself against necrotic energies.

Expanded Spell List

The Jeoseung Saja lets you choose from an expanded list of spells when you learn a warlock spell. The following spells are added to the warlock spell list for you.

Spell Level	Spells
1st	False Life, Hunter's Mark
2nd	Pass Without Trace, Silence
3rd	Bestow Curse, Spirit Guardians
4th	Locate Creature, Phantasmal Killer
5th	Flame Strike (necrotic instead of radiant), Reincarnate

Regalia of the Death God

At 1st Level, you can use your bonus action to wear the uniform of the Jeoseung Saja for 1 minute. Your shadow wraps around you and your body no longer emits warmth, but the chilling mist of the graveyard. You gain the following benefits while transformed:

- Your base AC equals 13 + your Charisma modifier.
- You gain resistance to Necrotic damage.
- The damage you deal against an Undead creature ignores their resistance to necrotic damage.

- Once during each of your turns, as a Bonus Action, you can force your quarry targeted by any warlock spell that curses or marks a target to make a Charisma saving throw, and if the saving throw fails, their speed is reduced to 0 on their next turn.

You can transform a number of times equal to your Charisma modifier and you regain all expended uses when you finish a long rest.

Underworldly Vision

At 6th level, you begin to perceive the shapes of mortality among the living. You gain the ability to sense living beings within 30 ft of you and if you can see them and they are in direct line of sight of you, perceive what (if anything) threatens to kill them within the next minute.

In addition, you no longer need to maintain concentration over spells that curse or mark a target.

Princess Bari's Blessing

At 10th level, the patron deity of the Jeoseung Saja, Princess Bari, acknowledges your deeds and blesses your regalia with a personal mark. When you use a bonus action to mark or curse a target, you can use your Regalia of the Death God feature without spending an action. You gain advantage on death saving throws.

In addition, while having donned the Regalia of the Death God, you gain the following benefits:

- All attacks made against a creature you have cursed or marked have Advantage.
- You gain incorporeal movement. You can move through other creatures and objects as if they were Difficult Terrain. You take 1d10 force damage if you end your turn inside a creature or object and are forced out into an adjacent space.

Reaper's Judgment

At 14th level, the pain your weapons inflict is amplified by the weight of your target's sins. While donning the Regalia of the Death God, your result when rolling damage dice for weapon attacks or warlock spells that curse or mark a target is always maximized. For example, instead of dealing 1d6 damage to a creature, you deal 6.

Min Kim

Christopher Humphries "CeeHaz"

WIZARD: SCHOOL OF ASTROMANCY

The Heavens have long captured the imaginations of mages and laymen alike, but the School of Astromancy recognizes wisdom and power in the birth, collapse, and movement of stars. Considered an offshoot of the school of Divination, Astromancers are adept at reading destiny in stars more ancient than their planet. They draw from the ambient energies of the cosmos found in near-eternal supply to power their spells beyond ordinary boundaries.

To become an Astromancer requires years of study in not just the arcane arts, but also astronomy. Rigorous study must be paired with an iron discipline to identify and appreciate magic beyond the firmament, but also to resist the deceitful whispers of the entities that exist there.

Stargazer

Starting at 2nd level, you create a Tiny spyglass in your free hand, marking your initiation into the School of Astromancy. The magic spyglass has the following properties:

- You can use the Spyglass as a spellcasting focus for your wizard spells.
- The Spyglass is considered to be a Navigator's Tool. You are considered Proficient with the Navigator's Tools. Add double your Proficiency bonus to the check, instead of your normal proficiency bonus.
- Once per long rest, after casting a Divination spell of up to 3rd level, you may regain the spell slot that you've used.

If your magic spyglass is lost, you must spend 1 hour during a short or long rest to create another. The spyglass does not function for anybody except you and cannot be sold.

Nova Casting

At 2nd level, you can imbue your spells with celestial power.

When you cast a spell with a spell slot, you can substitute the damage type with Radiant (you can change only one damage type per casting of the spell).

In addition, you can blind a creature that took radiant damage from your spell or feature for 1 minute. They must make a Constitution saving throw against your spell save DC or be blinded. At the end of each of their turns, they may make a new Constitution saving throw. On a success, they are no longer blinded. Once you use this effect, you can't do so again until you take a short or long rest.

Stellar Realignment

At 6th level, during your spell preparation, you Align your spyglass with a constellation associated with one school of magic, bolstering your spellcasting aptitude. When you cast a spell of a school your spyglass is aligned to, you can choose to enhance it with its respective benefit:

- **Abjuration:** When you cast an Abjuration spell of 1st level or higher, your target gains temporary hit points equal to your Wizard level. While these temporary hit points are still active, any enemy that attacks the targeted creature takes force damage equal to your Wizard level.
- **Conjuration:** When you cast a Conjuration spell of 1st level or higher to summon a creature, they gain +2 to their Armor Class. In addition, their attack rolls and saving throws receive a 1d4 bonus.
- **Divination:** After you cast a Divination spell of 1st level or higher, you may choose to succeed on your next saving throw. This effect is expended if you do not use it within 1 minute.
- **Enchantment:** When casting an Enchantment spell of 1st level or higher against a creature you're in combat with, they cannot benefit from Advantage on their saving throw against the spell.
- **Evocation:** When you roll damage from an Evocation spell of 1st level or higher, you may reroll any 1's and 2's. You must use your new result even if it is lower.
- **Illusion:** When you cast an Illusion spell of 1st level or higher, you can also turn yourself Invisible (concentration required). You maintain concentration from the spell if any and Invisibility as if they were the same effect. You remain invisible for the spell's duration or until you attack or cast another spell.
- **Necromancy:** When you cast a Necromancy spell of 1st level or higher, you gain temporary hit points equal to 5 x the spell's level.
- **Transmutation:** When you cast a Transmutation spell of 1st level or higher, your target also gains the effects of the Haste spell (concentration required). You maintain concentration from the spell if any and Haste as if they were part of the same effect.

You can enhance a spell like this once and regain the ability to do so after a short or long rest. Starting at 10th level, you can align your spyglass to two schools of magic and enhance your spells twice. At 14th level, you can align your spyglass to three schools of magic and enhance your spells three times.

Grand Cross

Starting at 10th level, you're in constant alignment with the heavens and receive their protection. You gain resistance to radiant damage.

Supernova

Starting at 14th level, as an action, you can expend a use of Stellar Realignment to summon a Tiny star in an unoccupied space within 150 ft of you and force it to explode. Each creature within 20 ft radius from the star must make a Dexterity saving throw against your spell save DC. They take 10d10 radiant damage on a failed save, or half as much as a successful one.

CLASSES

Angelica Kim

TACTICIAN

Leaders on the battlefield, Tacticians advance their forces from the front lines, carrying out their strategies directly. The keen observations and timing of an expert strategian can fulfill all the conditions necessary to overcome the fiercest of foes. Outside of battle, their keen intuition and education prove to be effective leadership tools.

Class Features

As a Tactician, you gain the following class features.

Hit Points

Hit Dice: 1d8 per Tactician level
Hit Points at 1st Level: 8 + your Constitution modifier
Hit Points At Higher Levels: 1d8 (or 5) + your Constitution modifier per Tactician level after 1st

Proficiencies

Armor: Light Armor, Medium Armor, Shields
Weapons: Simple Weapons, Martial Weapons, all firearms
Tools: Calligrapher's Supplies and one instrument of your choice of your choice
Saving Throws: Wisdom, Charisma
Skills: Choose three from Animal Handling, Athletics, Deception, History, Insight, Intimidation, Perception, Performance, and Persuasion

THE TACTICIAN

Level	Proficiency Bonus	Features	Stratagems Known
1st	+2	Defensive Riding, Trusted Mount	-
2nd	+2	Fighting Style, Stratagem (d6)	2
3rd	+2	Military Art, Expertise	2
4th	+2	Ability Score Improvement	2
5th	+3	Extra Attack	2
6th	+3	Art Feature, Discerning Eye	3
7th	+3	Advanced Mount	3
8th	+3	Ability Score Improvement	3
9th	+4	Valiant Resistance (x1)	4
10th	+4	Expertise, Stratagem (d8)	4
11th	+4	Art Feature	4
12th	+4	Ability Score Improvement	5
13th	+5	Valiant Resistance (x2)	5
14th	+5	Battle Tested Mount	5
15th	+5	Art Feature	6
16th	+5	Ability Score Improvement	6
17th	+6	Valiant Resistance (x3)	6
18th	+6	Legendary Mount, Stratagem (d10)	7
19th	+6	Ability Score Improvement	7
20th	+6	Master Strategist	7

Equipment

You start with the following Equipment, in addition to the Equipment granted by your background:

- (a) a martial weapon and a shield or (b) two martial weapons
- (a) a light crossbow and 20 bolts or (b) a longbow and 20 arrows
- (a) a Diplomat's Pack or (b) an Explorer's Pack
- Scale Mail

Trusted Mount

Beginning at 1st level, you've trained for years riding on the back of a mount and developed a close bond with your companion. Choose one of the following options:

Behemoth-Kin

Medium or Large Beast

Armor Class 13 + Proficiency Bonus
Hit Points 5 + six times your Tactician level
Speed 40 ft., Climb 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	10 (+0)	16 (+3)	4 (-3)	11 (+0)	4 (-3)

Saving Throws mount's Con modifier + proficiency bonus
Senses: Passive Perception 10
Languages: Understands the languages you speak
Challenge: -
Proficiency Bonus: equals your bonus

Charge. If the Behemoth-Kin moves at least 20 ft. straight toward a target and then hits it with a gore Attack on the same turn, the target takes an extra 9 (2d8) bludgeoning damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC (8 + your charisma modifier + proficiency bonus) Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.

Actions

Gore. *Melee Weapon Attack:* (your charisma modifier + proficiency bonus to hit), reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 1d8 + Proficiency Bonus piercing damage.

Sacred Serpent

Medium or Large Dragon

Armor Class 13 + Proficiency Bonus
Hit Points 5 + five times your Tactician level
Speed 40 ft., Swim 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)	16 (+3)	14 (+2)

Saving Throws: mount's Wis modifier + proficiency bonus
Senses: Darkvision 60 ft., Passive Perception 13
Languages: Can speak the languages you speak
Challenge: -
Proficiency Bonus: equals your bonus

Amphibious: The Sacred Serpent can breathe air and water.

Actions

Constrict. *Melee Weapon Attack:* (your charisma modifier + proficiency bonus to hit), reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 1d6 + Proficiency Bonus bludgeoning damage. The target is grappled (escape DC (8+your charisma modifier + proficiency bonus)). Until this grapple ends, the target is restrained, and the Sacred Serpent can't constrict another target.

Breath Weapon (Recharges after a short or long rest). The Sacred Serpent exhales acidic gas in a 15 ft cone. Each creature in that area must make a DC (8 + charisma modifier + proficiency bonus) Dexterity saving throw, taking (2d6) acid damage on a failed save, or half as much on a successful one.

Winged Companion

Medium or Large Celestial

Armor Class 12 + Proficiency Bonus
Hit Points 5 + four times your Tactician level
Speed 40 ft., Fly 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	16 (+3)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)

Saving Throws mount's Dex modifier + proficiency bonus
Senses: Passive Perception 12
Languages: Understands the languages you speak
Challenge: -
Proficiency Bonus: equals your bonus

Thousand Ri Rush (Recharges after a short or long rest). As part of its movement, until the end of its turn, the Companion can double your movement speed and move without taking opportunity attacks.

Actions

Slam. *Melee Weapon Attack:* (your charisma modifier + proficiency bonus to hit), reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 1d6 + Proficiency Bonus bludgeoning damage.

Your mount obeys your commands as best as it can. It takes its turn during your turn in the Initiative order. Your mount can move and use its reaction on its own, but the only action it takes is the Dodge action, unless you take a bonus action on your turn to command it to take another action. That action can be one in its stat block or some other action. You can also sacrifice one of your attacks when you take the Attack action to command the mount to take the Attack action. If you are incapacitated, the mount can take any action of its choice, not just Dodge.

During a Short Rest, you tend to your mount's wounds during your rest and it regains the Hit Points that you also recover from spending your Hit Dice.

When your mount falls to 0 Hit Points, it doesn't die immediately and must make death saving throws. On its second success, it becomes stable and on its second failure, it dies.

If your mount has died within the last hour, you can use your action to touch it and expend a Hit die. The mount returns to life by channeling your life energy through your shared bond after 1 minute with all its hit points restored.

Defensive Riding

Beginning at 1st level, you and your mount deepen your mutual bond in battle and protect one another. You gain the following benefits while you are mounted and aren't incapacitated:

- You gain +1 to your Armor Class while atop your mount.
- If your mount takes damage, you can redirect the damage that your mount would take to yourself (no action required).
- As a Reaction, you can substitute your Armor Class for your mount's Armor Class when an enemy attacks them.

Fighting Style

At 2nd level, you adopt a particular style of Fighting as your specialty. Choose one of the following options. You can't take a Fighting Style option more than once, even if you later get to choose again.

Archery

You gain a +2 bonus to Attack rolls you make with ranged Weapons.

Defense

While you are wearing armor, you gain a +1 bonus to AC.

Dueling

When you are wielding a melee weapon in one hand and no other Weapons, you gain a +2 bonus to Damage Rolls with that weapon.

Great Weapon Fighting

When you roll a 1 or 2 on a damage die for an Attack you make with a melee weapon that you are wielding with two hands, you can reroll the die and must use the new roll, even if the new roll is a 1 or a 2. The weapon must have the Two-Handed or Versatile property for you to gain this benefit.

Protection

When a creature you can see attacks a target other than you that is within 5 feet of you, you can use your Reaction to impose disadvantage on the Attack roll. You must be wielding a Shield.

Stratagem

At 2nd level, you studied various tactics you can employ to outwit and outmaneuver your enemies.

Stratagems: You learn two stratagems of your choice. Based on your assessment of circumstances, you call to initiate a Stratagem to turn the tides of the encounter in your favor. When you gain certain Tactician levels, you learn additional stratagems of your choice, as shown in the Stratagems Known column of the Tactician table. A level prerequisite refers to your level in this class.

Additionally, when you gain a level in this class, you can choose one of the stratagems you know and replace it with another stratagems that you could learn at that level.

Stratagem Dice: You have a number of Stratagem Dice (d6s) equal to your proficiency bonus. You expend a Stratagem die after using a Stratagem. You regain all Stratagem Dice after you finish a short or long rest. Your die increases at 10th level to d8 and 18th level to d10.

Saving Throws: Some of your stratagems require your target to make a saving throw to resist the strategem's effects. The saving throw DC is calculated as follows:

Stratagem save DC = 8 + your proficiency bonus + your Charisma modifier

Expertise

At 3rd Level, choose two of your skill Proficiencies. Your Proficiency Bonus is doubled for any ability check you make that uses either of the chosen Proficiencies.

At 10th level, you can choose another two skill Proficiencies to gain this benefit.

Military Art

At 3rd Level, you choose a Military Art that forms the foundation of your strategies, such as the Art of the General. Your choice grants you features at 3rd Level and again at 6th, 11th, and 15th levels.

Ability Score Improvement

When you reach 4th Level, and again at 8th, 12th, 16th, and 19th level, you can increase one ability score of your choice by 2, or you can increase two Ability Scores of your choice by 1. As normal, you can't increase an ability score above 20 using this feature.

Extra Attack

Beginning at 5th level, you can attack twice, instead of once, whenever you take the Attack action on your turn.

Discerning Eye

At 6th level, your depth of experience has given you the ability to read other people's strengths and weaknesses. Select a creature that you can see within 60 ft of you. If you spend a minute observing them, you learn whether their Hit Points are higher than yours, their Damage Resistances and Vulnerabilities, and their Saving Throw proficiencies.

In combat, you can use this feature as a bonus action.

Advanced Mount

Beginning at 7th level, your mount's attacks count as magical for the purpose of overcoming resistance and immunity to nonmagical attacks and damage. Your mount also gains a new ability:

- **Winged Companion:** When the Winged Companion uses its Thousand Ri Rush trait, you can make your next attack roll with Advantage.
- **Behemoth-Kin:** On a Charge, if the target is knocked prone, they're also pushed 10 ft. away from the Behemoth-kin.
- **Sacred Serpent:** While a creature is restrained by the Sacred Serpent's Constrict action, they cannot take any Reactions.

Valiant Resistance

Beginning at 9th level, if your mount fails a saving throw, you can choose to have it succeed instead.

You can use this feature twice between long rests starting at 13th level and three times between long rests starting at 17th level.

Battle Tested Mount

Beginning at 14th level, your mount has grown more experienced fighting alongside you. They gain the following benefits:

- The damage die of your mount's melee weapon attacks as shown on their statblock is increased by two steps (for example: d6's become d10's and d8's become d12's).
- Your mount gains a +1 bonus to both their attack rolls and damage rolls.

Legendary Mount

At 18th level, your shared exploits pushed your mount to its fullest potential, evolving it and awakening new abilities.

- **Winged Companion:** Once you use this feature, you can't do so again until you finish a long rest. The Winged Companion taps into its Celestial nature and emanates life energy. Once per long rest, as an action, the Winged Companion spreads its wings and emanates a healing light. Each creature of your choice within 30 feet of the Winged Companion regains Hit Points equal to 3d8 + your Charisma modifier. This feature has no effect on undead or constructs.

- **Behemoth-Kin:** The Behemoth-Kin rampages in a frenzy. Once per long rest, the Behemoth-Kin can move up to its move speed through spaces occupied by hostile creatures without it or its rider triggering Opportunity Attacks and through enemy spaces. Any creature it moves through must make a Dexterity saving throw against DC (8 + your Charisma modifier + Proficiency Bonus). A creature takes 10d6 bludgeoning damage and fails prone on a failed save or half as much on a successful one.
- **Sacred Serpent:** The Sacred Serpent ascends and takes on aspects of a true Dragon. Once per long rest, when Sacred Serpent uses its breath weapon, its damage increases to 10d6 acid damage and its range increases to a 30 ft. cone. Alternatively, each creature in a 30 ft. cone on a failed DC (8 + your Charisma modifier + Proficiency Bonus) Constitution saving throw, each creature in the area of its breath weapon can't use reactions, has their speed halved, and can't make more than one attack on its turn. In addition, the creature can use either an action or a bonus action on its turn, but not both. These effects last for 1 minute. The creature can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself with a successful save.

Master Strategist

At 20th level, your sharpened instincts ensure that you will never be caught at a disadvantage. At the beginning of combat after each creature rolls for initiative, even if it isn't your turn, you can use one of your Stratagems. You do not expend a use of your Stratagem dice for this.

ART OF THE GENERAL

Tacticians that follow the Art of the General are warriors that charge into battle alongside or even ahead of their soldiers. They hone both body and mind equally and ensure they can enact their tactics personally. While Generals take the fight to their opponents directly, they're not suicidal; they prioritize the survival of those who have entrusted their lives to them.

Bonus Proficiencies

At 3rd level, you gain proficiency with Heavy Armor.

Mobile Fortress

Starting at 3rd level, whenever you use a Stratagem, you gain temporary Hit Points equal to twice your Tactician level + your Charisma modifier. In addition, whenever an ally adjacent to you is hit with an attack or fails their saving throw against a spell targeting them, you can take the damage directed at them instead.

Apply your Resistances and Vulnerabilities to the damage taken.

Up Close and Personal

At 6th level, no matter how many scars you and your trusted mount suffer, the two of you still prefer fighting enemies up close and personal. As a Reaction, if your trusted mount successfully hits a creature with a weapon attack, you can make an unarmed strike or weapon attack against the target. On a hit, the target must make a Constitution saving throw against your stratagem DC. On a failure, they are Stunned until the end of your next turn.

Battle Command

At 11th level, you've become adept at issuing battle commands under intense pressure. You can use one of your attacks when you take the Attack action to use a Stratagem.

Counter-Offensive

At 14th level, you use the momentum from shielding your ally and launch a counterattack. If you've taken damage meant for your ally, you can use a Reaction to move up to your movement speed toward the attacker and make a weapon attack against them. On a hit, add half of your levels in Tactician (rounded down) to your damage roll.

ART OF THE HWARANG

Tacticians who adhere to the Art of the Hwarang are sensitive to the tremendous toll of lives taken in conflict. Their studies in strategies and martial disciplines have been tempered with a mortal element that they channel into their poetry.

Art of the Hwarang Spellcasting			Spell Slots Per Level			
Tactician Level	Cantrips Known	Spells Known	1st	2nd	3rd	4th
3rd	2	3	2			
4th	2	4	3			
5th	2	4	3			
6th	2	4	3			
7th	2	5	4	2		
8th	2	6	4	2		
9th	2	6	4	2		
10th	3	7	4	3		
11th	3	8	4	3		
12th	3	8	4	3		
13th	3	9	4	3	2	
14th	3	10	4	3	2	
15th	3	10	4	3	2	
16th	3	11	4	3	3	
17th	3	11	4	3	3	
18th	3	11	4	3	3	
19th	3	12	4	3	3	1
20th	3	13	4	3	3	1

Spellcasting

When you reach 3rd level, your appreciation for life and the arts awaken your ability to cast spells.

Cantrips

You learn two cantrips of your choice from the Bard spell list. You learn another Bard cantrip of your choosing at 10th level.

Spell Slots

The Hwarang Spellcasting table shows how many spell slots you have to cast your spells of 1st level and higher. To cast one of these spells, you must expend a slot of the spell's level or higher. You regain all expended spell slots when you finish a long rest.

For example, if you know the 1st-level spell Heroism and have a 1st-level and a 2nd-level spell slot available, you can cast Heroism using either slot.

Spells Known of 1st Level and Higher

You know three 1st-level Bard spells of your choice.

The Spells Known column of the Hwarang Spellcasting table shows when you learn more Bard spells of 1st level or higher. Each of these spells must be of a level for which you have spell slots. Select spells that are thematically appropriate for your artistic tastes. For instance, when you reach 7th level in this class, you can learn one new spell of 1st or 2nd level.

The spells you learn at 8th, 14th, and 20th level can be any spell of your choice from any class for which you have spell slots.

Whenever you gain a level in this class, you can replace one of the Bard spells you know with another spell of your choice from the Bard spell list. The new spell must be of a level for which you have spell slots.

Spellcasting Ability

Charisma is your spellcasting ability for your Bard spells, since your poetic soul is the source of your spellcasting ability. You use your Charisma whenever a spell refers to your spellcasting ability. In addition, you use your Charisma modifier when setting the saving throw DC for a Bard spell you cast and when making an attack roll with one.

Spell save DC = 8 + your proficiency bonus + your Charisma modifier

Spell attack modifier = your proficiency bonus + your Charisma modifier.

Inspiring Stratagem

Starting at 3rd level, you gain Deescalate, Disinformation, or Sow Panic as one of your Stratagems. You can make a Charisma (Performance) check in place of any Charisma check as part of your Stratagem effect.

In addition, whenever you use a Stratagem, you can target a creature that can see or hear you within 60 ft of you. That creature gains temporary Hit Points equal to your Stratagem dice + your Charisma modifier. While the creature has temporary Hit Points in this way, they also gain advantage on saving throws against being Frightened.

Spellsong Crescendo

At 6th level, you've learned to enhance the power in your forces' spellcasting. When you or an ally that see or can hear you within 60 feet of you casts a spell using at least a 1st level spell slot that restores hit points of or deals damage to creatures, you can as a reaction roll your Stratagem die and add the number rolled to the result of your damage dice or number of hit points restored. You must have a Stratagem die available to use this feature, but you do not expend your die.

Subliminal Gambit

At 11th level, you weave your orders into your magic. After casting a cantrip, you may use a Stratagem that normally requires an Action as a bonus action.

Reverberating Legacy

At 14th level, your spells leave behind reverberations in the air around you that subconsciously propels its listeners to their maximum potential. After using your action to cast a spell, an aura that lasts until the end of your next turn extends out from you in a 30 ft radius.

While in this aura, the effects of being Charmed, Frightened, Incapacitated, Paralyzed, and Stunned are suppressed, but not removed. All creatures in the aura

gain Advantage on their next saving throw to end these effects.

ART OF THE SANCHEOK

Through your occultic research and your experience fighting or commiserating with wild creatures, you've learned to stimulate your own trusted mount's evolution. Other Tacticians consider Sancheoks to be eccentric for their obsessive research into the ways and habits of monsters. They, however, possess the atypical minds suited to devise strategies against calamities brought by creatures rather than rivaling armies.

False Reincarnation

At 3rd level, you stimulate your trusted mount's evolution and allow it to gain powers that belong to an observed creature. As a Bonus Action, you can spend 1 Stratagem Die to grant your mount an action belonging to an observable creature 30 ft. from your mount. The creature must have a challenge rating equal to your level or lower.

If you choose to grant your mount a creature's action in this way, you must have seen it use that trait or action. You cannot use this feature to grant your mount Legendary Actions, Lair Action, any action from the Spellcasting trait, or any action that requires using an item (any attack that uses a weapon that is not a part of the creature). If your mount gains a melee or ranged attack from another creature in this way, it can roll using its own attack and damage modifiers.

You must use your Action to command your mount to use this copied action. If their action forces a creature to make a saving throw, your mount can use your Stratagem DC in place of the action's original DC.

Your mount can retain only one action in this way. If you use this feature while your mount has already learned another creature's action, the new action replaces the previous one. They retain access to the action for up to 10 minutes. If they lose the action while the duration of its effect is still ongoing, the action's effects end automatically.

Sancheok's Bestiary

Starting at 3rd level, you've begun to compile a meticulous record of creatures you've encountered in a bestiary. Your bestiary can be a leather bound book whose cover was crafted from the hide of a game you've hunted or a tome inscribed with necromantic and transmutative runes. While holding this bestiary, if you meet another creature that you saw and survived an encounter against, you and your mount gain a +1 bonus to damage rolls and skill checks against them.

In addition, when you use your False Reincarnation feature to copy another creature's action and grant it to your mount, you can inscribe it into your bestiary. As long as you hold this bestiary, you can use False Reincarnation to grant your mount an action they've learned at one point in the past. If you lose this bestiary, you lose all records of monsters you've encountered in the past and must spend a long rest crafting another one. You can make a backup copy by spending 1 hour and 1 gp for the total challenge rating of each creature inscribed.

Snap Evolution

At 6th level, if you observe another creature using an action and your mount possesses an action granted to them by False Reincarnation, you can use False Reincarnation as a Reaction. The previous action you granted your mount is replaced by the triggering action. You do not need to spend a Stratagem Die to use False Reincarnation in this way. You can use this feature a number of times equal to your proficiency bonus. You regain all expended uses of it when you finish a long rest.

False Metamorphosis

At 11th level, your mount undergoes a more radical transformation through its reincarnation. When you use False Reincarnation, you can spend an additional Stratagem Die to grant your mount one of your target's traits in addition to its action. You cannot use this feature to grant your mount the Legendary Resistance trait or any trait that would grant it immunities to damage or spells. They maintain the trait for the same duration as they're able to use the action granted by False Reincarnation. Your mount can retain two traits or actions granted

by False Reincarnation. These traits or actions can be from the same creature or from two different creatures. You must still use a Bonus Action and spend 1 Stratagem Die to gain the second trait or action.

Soul Synthesis

Starting at 14th level, your mount retains one trait granted to them by False Reincarnation even after False Reincarnation's duration ends. This trait counts up to the maximum number of traits your mount can possess at a time. During your long rest, you can change this trait by using another possessed by a creature listed in your bestiary.

STRATAGEMS

Attack Order

You command your troops to assault your enemy when they least suspect it. As a Bonus Action, you command a willing creature within 100 feet to use their Reaction to make one weapon attack against a target. Your ally gains a bonus to their attack roll equal to your stratagem die. As a Bonus Action on your turn for 1 minute, or until you lose your concentration (as if you were concentrating on a spell), you can command an ally to use their Reaction in this way.

Deescalate

As an Action, you negotiate for an end to conflict. All creatures that can see or hear you and understand your language that you choose within 60 ft. of you must make a contested Wisdom (Insight) check against your Charisma (Deception or Persuasion) check. If you or your companions are fighting the creatures, they have advantage on their roll. Add your Stratagem die to your roll. On a failure, they are Charmed for 1 minute and become indifferent to you and your allies. This ends if the target is attacked or harmed by a spell.

Disinformation

As an Action, you can attempt to hide your true strength from your enemies. Select up to three creatures that can hear you and understand your language within 60 ft of you. Make a contested Charisma (Deception) check against their Wisdom (Insight). You can add your Stratagem die to your check. Each enemy that failed must roll their Stratagem die and subtract that number from their result on an attack roll or saving throw. This effect lasts for 1 minute, or until you lose your concentration (as if you were concentrating on a spell).

Formation Step

As an Action, three allies that can see or hear you within 30 ft from you can use their Reactions to move up to their movement speed. They gain a bonus to their Armor Class equal to your Stratagem die until the end of their movement.

Scapegoat

As an Action, all hostile creatures within 60 ft of you must make a Wisdom saving throw against your Stratagem save DC. On a failure, they have Disadvantage on attack rolls against all creatures except a willing creature of your choosing for 1 minute, or until you lose your concentration (as if you were concentrating on a spell). The creature you chose gains temporary hit points equal to twice the roll of your Stratagem die.

Sow Panic

As a Reaction, when an enemy that can see or hear you misses an attack against a creature within 60 ft of you, make a contested Charisma (Intimidation) check against their Wisdom (Insight) check. Add your Stratagem die to your roll. On a failure, they are Frightened of that creature for 1 minute, or until you lose your concentration (as if you were concentrating on a spell).

Steady As We Go

Your unerring sense of caution lets you protect yourself and your troops from hidden dangers that others would easily miss. As an Action, each creature you choose within 30 feet (including you) can roll your Stratagem die and add the result when making Intelligence (Investigation) and Wisdom (Perception) checks and has a +5 bonus to Passive Investigation and Passive Perception for 1 hour, or until you lose your concentration (as if you were concentrating on a spell).

Stealth Operation

As an Action, each creature you choose within 30 ft. (including you) can roll Dexterity (Sleight of Hand and Stealth) checks with Advantage for 1 hour, or until you lose your concentration (as if you were concentrating on a spell). Each creature can roll your Stratagem die and add the result to their Initiative checks and can't be surprised during the duration of this effect.

All-Out Assault

Prerequisites 6th level

As an Action, you create an opening that leaves an enemy wide open for attacks. Select a creature within 60 ft of you. That target must make a Wisdom saving throw against your Stratagem save DC. On a failure, for 1 minute, or until you lose your concentration (as if you were concentrating on a spell), all creatures that successfully hit them with weapon attacks can roll your Stratagem die and deal additional damage equal to the result. On subsequent turns of yours before this stratagem ends, you can use a Bonus Action to target a new creature for this effect.

Rider's Rush

Prerequisites 6th level

As an Action, you command your mount to tap into its latent potential. Your mount gains an additional action on each of its turns for 1 minute, or until you lose your concentration (as if you were concentrating on a spell). That action can be used only to take the Attack (one weapon attack only), Dash, or Disengage. When your mount deals damage with its weapon attacks, you can deal additional damage equal to your Stratagem die.

Surprise Assault

Prerequisites 6th level

As a Reaction, when you roll Initiative, each creature you choose within 30 ft. (including you) can roll your Stratagem die and add the result to attack and damage rolls against any creature that hasn't taken a turn in combat yet.

We Never Fall

Prerequisites 6th level

Your troops know they can always fall back on your gambits, and a boost of adrenaline keeps them standing even when the situation is bleak. As a Reaction, when a creature of your choice within 60 feet is reduced to 0 Hit Points, they avoid falling Unconscious. Roll your Stratagem die and they regain Hit Points equal to the result.

Absolute Defense

Prerequisites 9th level, Art of the General

As an Action, select a willing creature who can see or hear you that is adjacent to at least one ally within 60 ft from you. When targets take damage, they can roll your Stratagem die and reduce the damage they take by the result as long as they remain adjacent to the targeted creature for 1 minute, or until you lose your concentration (as if you were concentrating on a spell). On subsequent turns of yours before this stratagem ends, you can use a Bonus Action to remove the effect from your chosen target and target a different ally for this effect.

Emergency Cantrip

Prerequisites 9th level, Art of the Hwarang

You've learned how to speedily cast cantrips to keep up with the demands of high pressure situations. As a Bonus Action, you cast a cantrip. You can choose either of the following effects:

- Roll your Stratagem die and add the result to damage dealt.
- Roll your Stratagem die and subtract the result from the saving throw of the targeted creature.

Monster Slayer's Advice

Prerequisites 9th level, Art of the Sancheok

As a Bonus Action, select a willing creature that can see or hear you within 30 ft. of you under the effects of a condition or magical effect. They can repeat their ability check or saving throw, adding your Stratagem die to the result, and on a success, the condition or effect ends.

Spellsong Encore

Prerequisites 15th level, Art of the Hwarang

When an ally within 60 ft. casts a spell, as a Reaction, if the spell was cast at higher level up to 5th level, they expend a spell slot corresponding to the spell's original level instead of the higher level spell slot.

Natural Selection

Prerequisites 15th level, Art of the Sancheok

Your mount learned to exploit their enemies' vulnerabilities using their evolved weapons. When your mount successfully deals damage against the creature, the creature must make a Constitution saving throw against your Stratagem DC. On a failure, it loses Resistance to the damage type it took damage from or if it didn't have Resistance to the damage type it took damage from, they gain Vulnerability to it. This effect lasts until the end of your next turn or until it first takes damage from that damage type.

United Stand

Prerequisites 15th level, Art of the General

As a Bonus Action, you enter a defensive stance and gain a bonus of +5 to AC and have Advantage on saving throws for 1 minute, or until you lose your concentration (as if you were concentrating on a spell). If targeted by an attack, creatures of your choice within 30 ft. of you (including yourself) can use their Reaction to roll your Stratagem die and add the result as a bonus to their AC including against the triggering attack

Mandate of Heaven

Prerequisites 18th level

Your gambits raise your ranks to the level of legend at the expense of personal glory. As an Action, at the start of your turn, you command a willing creature within 100 feet to take an additional turn. Your target also gains temporary hit points equal to the result of your remaining stratagem dice. You only spend one stratagem die when using this stratagem. You can't use this stratagem after you move and you become Incapacitated until the start of your next turn. You can't use this stratagem on a creature that is surprised.

Rider's Onslaught

Prerequisites 18th level

Your trusted mount surpasses all limitations. As a Bonus Action, your trusted mount regains another use of its legendary mount feature. Your trusted mount also gains temporary hit points equal to the result of your remaining stratagem dice. You only spend one stratagem die when using this stratagem.

Christopher Humphries "CeeHaz"

Weapons

Many traditional weapons are similar enough to common weapons that those statistics will suit them – a bonguk geom, hwandudaedo, and unggeom can all be adequately represented with the longsword statistics. For GMs willing to add complexity in order to capture the unique flavor of Korean weapons, use the following table.

SPECIAL WEAPONS

Weapons with special rules are described here.

Fighting Fan. If you hit a creature that is surprised or hasn't taken their turn yet with this weapon, you deal an additional 1d4 slashing damage.

Jukjangchang. You have an additional 5 feet of reach while using this weapon, but cannot attack opponents within 5 feet of you. Creatures who move from an area you can attack with this weapon to within 5 feet of you provoke attacks of opportunity.

Kee chang. If four or more allied creatures within a 20 foot radius wield a kee chang, all allied creatures within 20 feet of any of those creatures gain advantage on any checks to deceive, confuse, or intimidate an opponent while in combat.

Nangseon. As a Reaction, you may inflict 1d4 piercing damage on any creature that moves to within 5 feet of you. This damage is increased by the magical bonus of the weapon, if any, but not by Strength.

Woldo. You have disadvantage when you use a woldo to attack a target within 5 feet of you.

Name	Cost	Damage	Weight	Properties
Martial Melee Weapons				
Bonguk geom*	15 gp	1d8 slashing	3 lb	Versatile (1d10)
Dangpa*	5 gp	1d6 piercing	4 lb.	Thrown (range 20/60), versatile (1d8)
Fighting Fan	3 gp	1d4 slashing	-	Finesse, light, special
Jangchang	5 gp	1d10 piercing	10 lb	Heavy, reach, two-handed
Jukjangchang	8 gp	1d8 piercing	12 lb	Heavy, reach, two-handed, special
Kee chang	5 gp	1d8 piercing	10 lb	Heavy, reach, two-handed, special
Nangseon	15 gp	1d8 piercing	15 lb	Heavy, reach, two-handed, special
Pyeongon	15 gp	1d6 bludgeoning	15 lb	Heavy, reach, two-handed
Unggeom	15 gp	1d6 slashing	3 lb	Light, versatile (1d8)
Woldo	10 gp	1d12 slashing	6 lb	Heavy, reach, two-handed, special
Martial Ranged Weapons				
Gakgung	30 gp	1d6 piercing	2 lb	Ammunition (range 100/600), two-handed
Arcane Singijeon	N/A	1d12 piercing + 1d12 fire	10 lb	Ammunition (range 50/450), loading
Ammunition				
Singijeon rocket (5)	10 gp	-	1 lb	-

Spells

Awaken Alter Ego

5th level enchantment (Sorcerer, Warlock)
Casting Time: 1 hour
Range: A willing creature
Components: V S M (Rare oils and incense worth at least 500 gp, which the spell consumes)
Duration: Instantaneous

You awaken a dormant personality or aspect within yourself or a willing creature. The target remembers everything that happened over the course of their life, but also remembers parts of their past lives and their true memories if altered by the Modify Memory spell. In addition, the spell alters the mind of the creature and draws memories and experiences carved deep into the recesses of their soul. The creature can reselect their background, class, and proficiencies and rebuild their character up until their current character level. In the process, they can reassign their current ability scores and ability modifiers to different abilities to suit their new build.

Cosmic Rift

6th level conjuration (Druid, Sorcerer, Warlock, Wizard)
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: 100 ft. (20 ft. cube)
Target: A point of your choice within range
Components: V, S
Duration: Concentration, up to 1 minute

You tear open a rift into space shimmering with cosmic energies centered on a point you choose within range. The dark rift fills a 20-foot cube from that point for the duration. A creature with darkvision can't see through the darkness and nonmagical light can't illuminate it. Each creature that first enters the cube or that ends its turn there must succeed on a Charisma saving throw or be banished into the void of space. While there, the target is incapacitated and, if they require air to breathe, begins choking. The target remains there until they repeat their saving throw at the end of their turns and succeed or the spell ends. In either case, the target reappears in the space it left or in the nearest unoccupied space if that space is occupied.

Until the spell ends, you can use a bonus action on each of your turns to pull a star from the rift and fire it at a foe within 60 feet from the center. The target must make a Dexterity saving throw. On a failed save, they take 4d8 radiant damage or half as much on a successful one.

At Higher Levels. When you cast this spell using a spell slot of 7th level or higher, the damage increases for each of its effects by 1d8 for each slot level above 6th.

Village of the Spirits

7th level evocation (Bard, Druid)
Casting Time: 1 hour
Range: 10 ft.
Target: A tiny stone or wooden replica of a jangseung
Components: V, S, M (a Tiny stone or wooden replica of a jangseung)
Duration: 24 hours

You perform an elaborate ritual to raise a village by invoking the name of a guardian spirit. You summon the spirit to occupy the stone or wooden vessel which grows into a Jangseung, a 35-foot tall stone or wooden vessel that you've prepared to protect an area outdoors or underground. The area spans out to a 100-foot radius centered on the jangseung, protected by a translucent, spherical barrier. Creatures and objects that you designate at any time the spell is active can move through the barrier freely, but all other creatures and objects are barred from passing through them. Spells and other magical effects can't extend through the dome or be cast through it, but a Disintegrate spell destroys the barrier.

The spell fails if the radius includes an area under the hallow spell or an ongoing Cleric or Druid spell that places an area under the protection of holy (or unholy) or spiritual power. It also ends early if the jangseung at the center of the village is destroyed. The Jangseung has AC 15 and 150 hit points and is immune to poison and psychic damage. It is warded by Sanctuary using your spell DC.

Casting the spell targeting the Jangseung again extends the spell's duration an additional 24 hours. You can create a permanent village by casting this spell in the same location every day for one year.

The entire warded area radiates magic. The affected area is subject to the following effects:

Contact the Spirits. The jangseung serves as an intermediary between the material plane and the spiritual realm. Once per hour, a creature can ask the jangseung one question. The DM answers each question with one word, such as "yes," "no," "maybe," "never," "irrelevant," or "unclear" (if the entity doesn't know the answer to the question). If a one-word answer would be misleading, the DM might instead offer a short phrase as an answer.

Cozy Hospitality. Six 10-foot-radius clay huts rise from the ground, surrounding the jangseung. Each hut can comfortably fit up to nine creatures of Medium size or smaller. Each hut is stocked with 45 pounds of bland, but nourishing food and 30 gallons of water. You make all decisions about the huts' appearance with one door granting access to the interior and as many windows as you wish. The atmosphere inside the space is comfortable and dry, regardless of the weather outside.

If a character spends one or more Hit Dice during a short rest while inside a hut, instead of rolling, the player can instead use the highest number possible for each die. For example, instead of restoring 2d8 hit points to a creature, you restore 16.

Protection of the Spirits. The Jangseung and all designated creatures benefit from the effects of a constant Stoneskin spell while inside the village. Five Terra-Cotta Soldiers rise from the ground and patrol the village. They drive off intruders or those attacking the village or its residents. When the spell ends, the magic animating them disappears, and the trees take root again if possible.

Additional Spell Effect. You can place your choice of one of the following magical effects within the warded area:

- After forming, the village levitates up to 20 feet in the air with the barrier extending beneath the dome to form a flat surface that appears like earth, holding up the village. When the spell ends, all creatures in the village float gently to the ground if it is still aloft.
- The village barrier masks the area in a Hallucinatory Terrain until a creature succeeds on an Intelligence (Investigation) check against your spell DC.
- A gray cloud appears over the village. As an action on each of your turns, the cloud darkens and you can call a lightning bolt to target any point on the ground within the village. Each creature within 5 feet of that point must make a Dexterity saving throw. A creature takes 4d10 lightning damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

Divine Descent

9th level conjuration (Cleric, Warlock)
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Self
Components: V, S, M (a meal offering to your deity worth 300 gp that this spell consumes)
Duration: 1 minute

You invite an aspect of your deity to descend and inhabit your body through which to perform miracles. You gain 60 temporary hit points and you have advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects. While your body is inhabited by your god, creatures roll with Disadvantage on saving throws against your spells. You make spell attack rolls when you cast a spell from the Cleric or Warlock spell list with Advantage. When you normally roll one or more dice to ddeal damage or restore Hit Points with a spell, you instead use the highest number possible for each die. For example, instead of dealing 2d6 damage to a creature, you deal 12. This spell ends early if you lose all your temporary hit points.

Eye of the Moon

7th level illusion (Druid, Sorcerer, Warlock, Wizard)
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Self (30-foot cone)
Target: Each creature in a 360-foot cone
Components: V, S
Duration: 10 minutes

You form an illusory simulacrum of the moon which enervates those who look upon it. Each creature in a 30-foot cone that can see you must succeed on a Wisdom saving throw. On a failed save, they take 6d10 radiant damage and fall unconscious, asleep. A sleeper remains unconscious until the spell ends, they take damage, or someone spends an action to shake or slap them awake. Undead and creatures

immune to being charmed cannot be put to sleep, but can still take damage.

On a successful save, a target only takes half damage. If you are outdoors under clear skies, the power of your illusion strengthens and the spell's damage increases by 1d10.

At Higher Levels: When you cast this spell using a spell slot of 8th level or higher, roll an additional 1d10 for each slot level above 7th.

Grasping Barrier

4th level abjuration (Druid, Paladin, Sorcerer, Warlock, Wizard)
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Self (15-foot radius)
Target: Self (15-foot radius)
Components: V S
Duration: Concentration, up to 10 minutes

You create a magic circle that extends out to a 15-foot radius, 25-foot tall cylinder, remaining centered around you. The circle responds to hostile creatures and objects by creating shimmering tendrils that pull objects and creatures approaching you to the ground. When you cast this spell, you can designate any number of creatures you can see to be unaffected by it.

When the circle appears, each creature within its area must make a Strength saving throw or take 5d6 force damage, drop to the ground and become Prone and Restrained for the spell's duration. A creature must make a Strength saving throw when it enters the circle for the first time on a turn or ends its turn there. A creature restrained by the circle can use its action to make a Strength check against your spell save DC. If it succeeds, it is no longer restrained. The circle is difficult terrain.

Creatures making ranged attacks roll with disadvantage against targets within the cylinder.

At Higher Levels: When you cast this spell using a spell slot of 4th level or higher, the damage increases by 1d6 for each slot level above 4th.

Instant Delivery

1st level conjuration (ritual) (Bard, Ranger, Sorcerer, Warlock, Wizard)
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: 30 feet
Components: V, S, M (a piece of red silk string)
Duration: 1 hour

You create a mystical bond between yourself and a willing creature to share whatever you hold at a moment's notice. As part of the somatic components of this spell, you must be holding an item in one or both hands. This does not interfere with casting the spell. When you cast this spell, the target teleports from your hand or hands to the hand or hands of the target. On subsequent turns, you or the target can teleport that or any other object held in one or both hands to the hand or hands of the other person as a Bonus Action.

The spell immediately ends, and any teleport in process fails, if: any two people affected by the spell are more than 60 feet apart; the person receiving the object does not have enough hands free to hold the object being sent; any person attempts to teleport an item weighing more than 10 pounds; or the spell is cast again on any affected person. You can also dismiss the spell as an action.

At Higher Levels: When you cast this spell using a spell slot of 2nd level or higher, you can target one additional creature for each slot level above 1st. Any affected creature can teleport an item to any other affected creature.

Malicious Matrix

2nd level enchantment (Bard, Cleric, Paladin, Warlock)
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: 100 feet
Components: V, S
Duration: Concentration, up to 1 minute

You amplify a creature's negative emotions to lash out at an ally when they strike someone they are hostile to. The target must make a Wisdom saving throw. During the spell's duration, each time the target deals damage to an enemy, a friendly creature within 100 feet of them takes 2d8 psychic damage.

If there is more than one creature that is friendly to the target within range, you choose which one

takes the damage. At the DM's discretion, the spell may fail to do damage if the target does not consider the creature you choose to be a friend or ally, or if the target does not attack an object or creature towards which it has meaningful antagonism. If there is no creature that the target considers an ally within range, the target takes the damage.

At Higher Levels: When you cast this spell using a spell slot of 3rd level or higher, the damage increases by 1d8 slot level above 2nd.

Rolling Ja'i

5th level transmutation (Druid, Ranger, Sorcerer, Wizard)
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: 80 feet
Target: An unoccupied space within range
Components: V, S
Duration: Concentration, up to 1 minute

You transmute from the ground beneath you a 10-foot diameter rudimentary stone construct you've breathed life into in an unoccupied space of your choice within range. The Ja'i lasts for the duration. As a Bonus Action, you can move the Ja'i up to 50 feet. The Ja'i's movement is affected by difficult terrain and treats barriers up to 5 feet tall and pits up to 10 feet wide as difficult terrain.

If the Ja'i moves into a space occupied by a creature, that creature must make a Strength saving throw. On a failed save, the target takes 5d8 bludgeoning damage, falls prone, and the Ja'i continues its movement. On a successful save, the target takes only half damage and the golem stops moving this turn.

The Ja'i emanates an aura of lethargy. Any creature that starts or ends its turn within 5 feet of the golem takes a −2 penalty to AC and Dexterity saving throws and can't use reactions.

The Ja'i is an object that has AC 17 and hit points equal to your hit point maximum. If it drops to 0 hit points, the spell ends. It has a Strength of 22 (+6) and a Dexterity of 9 (-1). The hand doesn't fill its space.

At Higher Levels: When you cast this spell using a spell slot of 6th level or higher, the damage increases by 1d8 for each slot level above 3rd.

Soul Decree

3rd level necromancy (Cleric, Paladin, Warlock, Wizard)
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: 30 feet
Components: V S M (a doll or effigy of your enemy)
Duration: Concentration, up to 1 minute

You beseech a spirit to possess the body of a creature within range and partially wrest control. The target must succeed on a Charisma saving throw or be possessed by the spirit. While the target is possessed, you can use a Bonus Action to speak a one-word command to the target which they must follow. Because the spirit understands your language, your commands affect the target even if they don't understand you. They can repeat their saving throws at the end of their turn.

Some typical commands and their effects follow. You might issue a command other than one described here. If you do so, the DM determines how the target behaves. If the target can't follow your command, the spell ends.

At Higher Levels: When you cast this spell using a spell slot of 4th level or higher, you can affect one additional creature for each slot level above 3rd. The creatures must be within 30 feet of each other when you target them. When you command the target, other affected creatures must use their Reaction if available to follow the command as well.

Yeabin/judgedarts

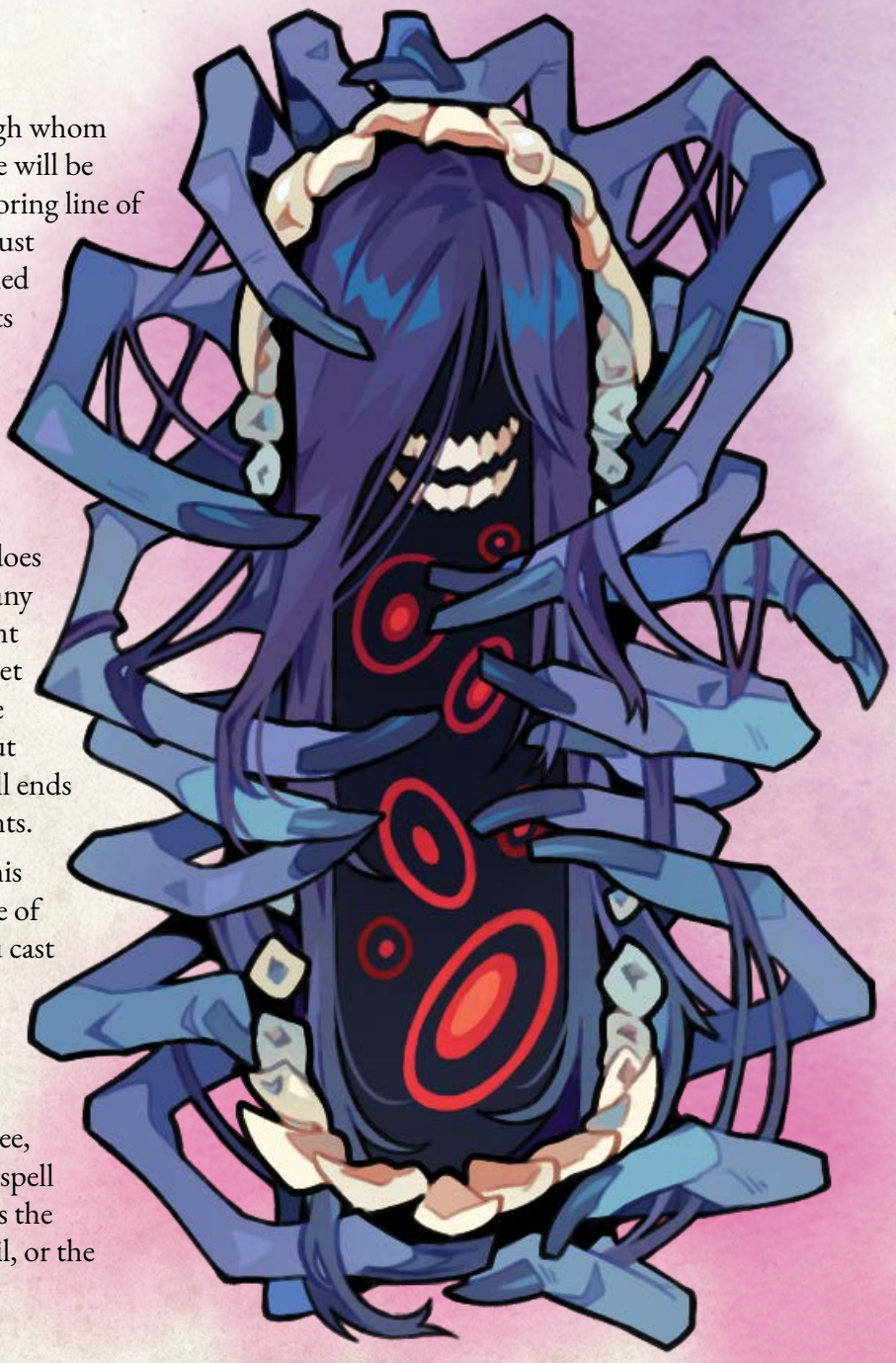
Spiritual Proxy

4th level necromancy (Cleric, Paladin, Warlock)
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: 60 feet
Components: V S
Duration: 1 round

You summon a spiritual proxy through whom your grudge against a target within range will be channeled. You can target a creature ignoring line of sight. A creature targeted by this spell must make a Charisma saving throw. On a failed save, the target's spiritual proxy manifests in an unoccupied space adjacent to you. The proxy resembles a shadowy silhouette of the target no larger than Medium size.

The proxy shares the target's game statistics except its speed is 0 feet and it does not take any actions. Whenever it takes any damage, the target takes the same amount of damage as Necrotic damage. The target can cast spells as though they were in the proxy's space or use the attack action, but they must use their own senses. The spell ends if the target or proxy drops to 0 Hit Points.

At Higher Levels: When you cast this spell using a 5th-level spell slot, the range of the spell increases to 200 feet. When you cast this spell using a 6th-level spell slot, you can target any creature you can perceive through your senses. When you cast this spell using a spell slot of 7th level or higher, you can target any creature you see, including through magical sensors. The spell gains a Material component and requires the target's body part, lock of hair, bit of nail, or the like, which the spell consumes.



MLarty

Min Kim

MAGIC IN DANGUK

The land of Danguk is rife with spiritual and natural energies that empower magic of all sources. Much comes from the celestial Sandalwood Tree holding aloft the Capital. Blessed with godly power, it sustains the system of reincarnation in Danguk and the travel of souls to and from the lands creates abundant magical energy from which all spellcasters at least indirectly draw from. Everyone born in Danguk possesses at least the potential to use magic which can grow exponentially through catalysts such as study, faith, one's blood, nature, or an outside force entirely.

While there are exceptions, the following lists ways in which certain spellcasters may discover their spellcasting potential:

Bard: The life energy that flows from the Sandalwood Tree bolsters the creative force of artistry. A bard's devotion awakens their latent power and allows them to channel magic into their art. Schools of art in Danguk work to harness this power, but only genuine inspiration serves as the necessary catalyst to awaken one's magical potential.

Cleric: As a land hosting the divine experiment of determining whether swaths of mortals can achieve divinity, the gods hold a vested interest in the affairs of this land. Gods of established pantheons listen for prayers of both believers and would-be believers who yearn for new paths in life. The Sandalwood Tree bolsters the power of belief, allowing clerics to draw power from philosophies and ideals much like paladins. Household and native gods, through the blessings of the land, are also powerful enough to grant spells to their worshipers much like the gods of the heavens.

Druid: Druids of Danguk often receive their powers directly from the central source: the Sandalwood Tree. Their powers may take shape in unique ways depending on the environments they dedicated their lives to. Conversely, should their powers come from the divine, it's rarely ever a single deity like with a cleric. Druids are gifted with the blessings of all of nature and are recognized by the native gods that reside in Danguk.

Paladin: When an individual forges an oath, a sacrifice of the self to a greater cause, their overwhelming zeal serves as a necessary catalyst for the divine to grace them. A paladin needn't discover their potential in a church or temple, but under any circumstances that inspire people to take up a cause.

Sorcerer: Sorcerers are the most common type of spellcaster in Danguk though many cannot cast beyond cantrips and basic spells. As many Dangukese people are descended from Hwanung, they awaken to sorcerous powers gifted to those with celestial or archfey bloodlines. The ancestors of other sorcerers may have encountered any number of entities native to Danguk like its dragons, fey, and native gods.

Warlock: Entities concerned with the results of the gods' experiment with rebirth work to subtly influence results into their favor. They contact individuals whose hearts resonate with their interests and offer power. Realizing this inevitability, the gods of the underworld sanctioned their messengers to sign contracts and enlist mortals to preserve the balance of life and death in Danguk.

Wizard: Though everyone possesses the spark of magic, they learn to control and cultivate it through their studies at schools devoted to magic. In Danguk, even a small village has at least one government-affiliated school. For those that seek disciplines of magic these respectable schools cannot teach (such as the necromantic arts devoted to raising the dead, summoning fiends, or enchantments that crush others' wills), there is a thriving black market for contraband scrolls and spellbooks. They may also find tutors willing to impart knowledge of less than respectable magic.

Mychal Amann

Yeabin/judgedarts

CAMPAIGN HOUSE RULES

Through their training as Mudang, PCs gain a keener connection to the worlds beyond than average adventurers. Even without any spellcasting abilities, this connection allows them to commune with or interact with spirits, either casting out malicious ones inhabiting other people or asking them for favors. To heighten the experience of playing as shamans, spiritual healers, or spiritual detectives, consider giving your players access to these following abilities:

Anti-Possession Techniques: Trained Mudang can use the sheer force of their spiritual presence or through those of the spirit residing in them and attempt as an Action to sever the connection of a ghost or entity from the bodies of people possessed. This requires a Nature or Religion check against DC 10 + the CR of the possessing spirit. On a success, the creature reappears in a space adjacent to the target they had been possessing and must roll Initiative.

Exorcisms: Exorcising spirits typically requires an Intelligence (Nature or Religion) check, but PCs can substitute Intelligence with another ability score as appropriate. For example, they can use Strength or Dexterity as part of their ritual to channel spiritual power into their bodies to quell the spirits physically, Wisdom or Charisma to compel the spirits through their own spiritual power or their innate presence. PCs will still need proficiency in either Nature or Religion to gain a proficiency bonus to their skill check however.

Beseech Spirit Wisp: Trained Mudang can ask lingering spirits in the area for a small favor. They know the Druidcraft or Thaumaturgy cantrip.

Conduct Gut: Mudang that can cast spells can cast a spell without using a spell slot as a gut, a rite that beseeches the gods and spirits through offerings, sacrifices, and performances. Casting a spell as a gut increases the casting time by 2 hours per spell level and requires a material component cost of 50 gp per spell level in addition to any preexisting material costs.

If a Mudang must prepare their spells during their long rest, they can only cast a spell that they've prepared as a gut.

Possession Resistance: When possessed, Mudang retain their sense of self. While their body is controlled by a spirit, they are conscious and can still speak and commune with the entity possessing their body. At the end of the possessed target's turn, the possessing entity must make a Constitution saving throw against DC 10 or half of the Mudang's Intelligence (Nature or Religion) check result, whichever is higher. On a failure, the possession ends and the spirit reappears in an adjacent space to the Mudang

Read Psychometric Resonance: By touching an object, Mudangs can read psychic impressions left on objects by their previous owners. They can detect from objects any lingering, significant emotional resonance attached to them, such as the joy from a child's beloved teddy bear, the sorrow from a widower's wedding ring, or the fear from a victim's murder weapon. If the PCs are looking for specific emotional resonances, they can ignore any other emotions they detect to find it.

If they find an object with an emotional resonance, they can spend 1 minute concentrating on the object to get a vision of the face of the person who imbued the item with the emotion in the first place. If the associated emotion is painfully negative, they might take 1d6 psychic damage, as determined by the GM.

Spirit Sense: As an action, Mudang can detect the presence of Undead with the Incorporeal Movement trait within 60 ft. of them, but not the location. They can use this feature once per long rest.

Valiant Actions: Over the course of this adventure, PCs will encounter and befriend allies who they can recruit to join them in their cause. To minimize the number of participants in encounters, the GM can employ a house rule called "Valiant Actions" that enable the PCs to control allied NPCs. Each recruitable NPC's stat block lists the valiant actions that the PCs can command them to use.

For each NPC accompanying the PCs, they gain a use of a single valiant action that they have in their pool of valiant actions (to a maximum of 3). For example, if only one NPC is actively accompanying them on their journey, they can use only one valiant action. Much like legendary actions, PCs can use a valiant action outside of their turn. Any PC can use one valiant action option at a time and only at the end of another creature's turn. The PCs share this pool and if one of them declares a valiant action, each PC will lose one use for that round. They regain their spent valiant actions at the start of a new round. They can forgo using their valiant actions, and they can't use them while incapacitated or otherwise unable to take actions. If surprised, they can't use them until after their first turn in the combat.

Certain valiant actions cost more valiant actions to use. These are more complicated actions that require additional allies to pull off. While the PCs resolve their encounters, their allied NPCs are usually in the background, holding off incoming opponents and unable to assist at their fullest capacity. With more allies working together in the background, they'll have more leeway to lend the PCs their support.

SKILL AND TOOL PROFICIENCIES

In this adventure, you will face challenges that pit you against a number of adversaries such as undead, aberrations, and fiends. Physical skills such as Acrobatics and Athletics will prove useful in escaping environmental challenges and the clutches of foes. Thieves' Tools will come in handy as you disarm traps set by rivals as you navigate through their lairs. Stealth will become useful at times for avoiding combat and detection by powerful enemies while plotlines will not require Sleight of Hand often.

As Mudang, you will be called on to exorcise restless spirits and Akryung or even disarm Haunts, spiritual influences that harm people in an environment. Doing so will depend on the Nature and Religion skills, both as you attempt to ward against the supernatural and to understand their workings. Arcana will see less use, but will be helpful

when you come across obstacles that require an understanding of the arcane.

Medicine will see occasional use as you attempt to identify physical maladies or piece together grisly events you stumble across. If you're low on healing spells, then having a Healer's Kit in addition to stabilize dying allies can be a boon. Animal Handling will also not be crucial to the plotlines, but can be useful to have in certain encounters. Perception, Insight, and Investigation will prove crucial as you attempt to find leads or treasure or discern the intent of certain NPCs.

You will encounter hostile creatures who are partial toward discussion. As you discern the motives of, for example, an undead creature whose lingering attachments keep them bound to the world, you can avoid combat by appealing to them. Persuasion will be critical in these circumstances with Deception and Intimidation being second. Being proficient with Performance will also help settle situations where certain creatures can be placated with song and dance. In Danguk, demonstrations of your skills as an artist may help you where mere words fail.

Though you will not use it frequently, having proficiency with water vehicles will serve you well as you journey through water or airborne areas.

LANGUAGES

Most NPCs you meet in the course of this adventure will speak Common with the Dangukese dialect. Due to the country's strong Dwarven population, Dwarvish is the second most popular language. With the land of Danguk being shared with nature spirits and dragons, adventurers often learn Draconic and either Sylvan or Primordial (with Sylvan being more popular).

SOCIETY

Modern Danguk society is rigidly hierarchical, following the ideals that bonds shared by fellow members of society are represented through the clear, mutual responsibilities they follow for one and that this is what builds a strong country. For better or worse, these meritocratic ideals are crystallized in the country's class system. The four classes in Dangukese society are:

Yangban: The country's ruling class, occupied by the literati and highest order of civil servants. They are the landed and unlanded elites, who after passing the civil service exams, are gifted prestige and certain privileges; such as being exempt from taxes. Many can also afford to cheat on said exams. Though the position, office, and privilege they occupy are hereditary, every failure of the family's third generation to pass the exams results in relinquishing their titles. Well-educated mages, bards, scholars, and philosophers occupy this social strata.

Jungin: Highly skilled workers, the middle class. Engineers, jurists, scientists, accountants, and artists occupy this social strata. Their privileges are observed for their close proximity to the Yangban who employ them in governmental and non-governmental positions. Like the Yangban, they are exempt from taxes. Many in this class can afford to pay tuition for their children to someday become Yangban.

Sangmin: Commoners who make the backbone of Danguk society. Their caste consists of poor workers such as farmers, fishers, laborers, merchants, and craftsmen. The majority of people in Danguk fall under this class. As such, they bear the highest burden of the country's taxes.

Cheonmin: The vulgar commoners that occupy the lowest social strata. This caste is hereditary and all people deemed as social outcasts are punished with this designation. They include Mudang, debtors, warlocks aligned with evil spirits, butchers, sex workers, and public performers. It's rare for Cheonmin to overcome the burden of their caste, but few exceptions exist.

- **Baekjeong:** The untouchables, this is the designation of Cheonmin that are ostracized from society.
- **Nobi:** Serfs tied to the land of Yangban, they are paid a pittance and given land in exchange for grueling physical labor.

FACTIONS

Powerbrokers within Danguk seek to shape society according to their ideologies.

Agency of Sage Arts: Of the ministries serving the king of Danguk in Asadal, the Ministry of Sage Arts is both the most secretive and prestigious. King Taejo and Archmage Oh Muwon co-founded the agency to gather the country's most brilliant minds to protect and research the country's Artifacts. With the covenant between Danguk and Gucheon having been broken several times, the Agency of Sage Arts also exists as a self-preservative body, researching Danguk's cycle of souls. Among other speculations, it's rumored that Archmage Oh discovered a method for immortality that exploits Danguk's system of reincarnation despite reports of her having passed away. Members of the agency, particularly paladins who have taken the Oath of Mystics, possess extrajudicial privileges cracking down against abuses of magic.

The Black Bear Clan: Founded by Princess Bari, the Black Bear Clan is an organization of exorcists and Mudang that work to maintain harmony between mortals and the extraplanar entities they share their land with. As the oldest organization in Danguk, most of the country's Mudang serve the public among its membership. Seniority determines leadership positions with venerable elders, referred to on a familial basis such as Grandmother, Mother, Grandfather, or Father, as wisdom and experience become treasured traits in guiding new generations. Regardless, the Black Bear Clan claims to operate on a non-hierarchical basis where regular members, brother and sister Mudang, serve in locales across Danguk, directly aiding people divine the future, heal spiritual illnesses, and banish malicious wraiths. During the Goryeo Dynasty, they did not take arms against the Luminists' mortal enemy, the tyrant Yongwang Gwangmoon, holding steadfast to their policy of political neutrality as spiritual healers. In the Age of Illumination, Luminists look down on the Black Bear Clan as a vestige of the past that abdicated its duty to the nation, and have since labeled them as pariahs.

Bureau of Royal Inspectors: The Office of Royal Inspectors answers to the king directly. Founded by King Taejo, the office serves as a formal check against royal abuses of power and against officials and ministers. Since foundation, they are tasked with three duties: first, they investigate misconduct by the Yangban and write regular reports to the king of public grievances. If they should discover misconduct during their covert investigations, they have the authority to arrest the guilty parties, even temporarily stripping a Yangban of their titles and privileges to do so. Second, the office researches Luminist philosophy and Danguk and world history, serving as official scholars to educate the king in daily lessons. Those tasked with this specific duty also operate the public press, recording and disseminating the king's discussions and lessons. Third, should the cries of the people quake and deafen the nation, the Office of Royal Inspectors possesses the legal right to remove the king from his throne. Out of all government bodies in Danguk, the Office of Royal Inspectors remains the deadliest with nearly half of its inspectors being killed in duty before the end of their service.

Jeguk Merchantry (JM Group): The wealthiest trade organization based in the city of Gungnae, Jeguk Merchantry seeks to revolutionize the production and distribution of magical items for common use. Founded during the Age of Illumination, the clans that make up the founding body of Jeguk Merchantry boast of their ancestors supporting King Taejo's revolt against Gwangmoon at the end of Goryeo. They were rewarded with positions in the Hall of Worthies as the country's foremost inventors, gaining crafting know-how which they passed on to the first founders of the JM Group. After JM Group's formation, they've worked directly with the government in Asadal on infrastructure projects such as commissioning cheap magical tools and security. The group's current chairwoman is Hae Iseul, a Dwarf who secretly funds pirate groups to smuggle arcane secrets or to protect her interests abroad.

Order of the Five Grains: The largest peasant association in Danguk, members of the order consist of farmers, druids, and nature clerics of Jacheongbi. They've married the causes of social

justice and food sovereignty, protesting against the system of land ownership that Nobis are bonded to. The order operates largely in rural areas, but more citizens without magical aptitude united under its banner as a unified voice in politics against the ruling Yangbans. For this, they're vilified as anti-state malcontents. Besides their social activism, the order serves as Danguk's largest adventuring guild, organizing able-bodied volunteers to address local issues.

Polaris's Beacon Party: A political faction in Asadal formed by new generations of Yangban within the king's court banded together, the Yangban that make up the Beacon Party consist mostly of ascended Chungin and some Sangmin. Due to their backgrounds as mostly first generation spellcasters, the party waves the banner of reform, working to deemphasize the role of magical aptitude in societal participation and grant more rights to non-casters. To that end, they support granting the king more power to react promptly to the needs of people. Though politically weaker than the Covenant Party, many members within the Beacon Party have close ties to wealthy merchants, funding the foundation of schools partial to their more flexible Luminist ideals.

Samjok-O's Covenant Party: The oldest political faction in Asadal, they claim legitimacy as students and successors of Archmage Oh Muwon and inheritors of King Taejo's command to govern and wield magic virtuously. Danguk's oldest Yangban clans claim membership in the Covenant Party. They spearheaded implementing the modern day caste system, believing that the right of governance should be dependent on magical aptitude. However, they take to heart Archmage Oh's warnings against magic and power concentrating in the hands of a single entity, enacting them into policy through aristocratic checks against the king. The party has ingrained these values into the curriculums of Danguk's oldest educational institutions. In recent years, clans aligned with the Covenant Party that have grown comfortable in power practice politics merely as a means to preserve power.

Society of Wailing Souls: The Society's origins can be traced back to the Black Bear Clan after the fall of Goryeo when public perception shifted against the Mudang. The people began to resent that same neutrality when the Clan refused to take up arms against the tyrannical Dragon King Gwangmoon of Goryeo. For that, they were ostracized and demoted to the lowest caste of society. Most Mudang maintained their age-old mission, but others resented being shunned from an ungrateful, new world. Those Mudang formed the Society of Wailing Souls, a cult centered around the Emperor of Darkness who they wish to imbue with their grudge against Danguk. While some seek to reclaim what they've lost in the ashes of the Age of Illumination, others desire a merciful end to the world as a failed project of the gods. They use curses to make puppets of people and their leadership has discovered secrets to extend their lives through undeath or other unnatural means.

Alex Ahad

Chagok Yun

Asadal, the City of the Gods

The capital city of Danguk, Asadal, is located directly at the center of the nation. Called the City of the Gods by Hwanung when he first descended onto the material world, its most notable landmark is the great Sandalwood Tree at its center, now towering at 200 meters into the sky. It's said that the roots of the tree travel far throughout the underground of Danguk, sometimes even stretching beyond the physical plane and into the ethereal. There it gathers the energies of life, in five corresponding phases, Fire, Earth, Water, Wood, and Metal. When someone dies and receives a proper burial in Danguk, they can enter the cycle of reincarnation through the Sandalwood Tree's roots.

While the tree survived the test of time, ever growing over the years, Asadal has changed dramatically in the past several decades. At the start of its history, structures and designs have been minimalistic according to veneration of nature. Various shrines were built by Mudang to commune with spirits and the land. Its King resided in a palace that surrounded the Sandalwood Tree and he ruled with absolute power. While he took spiritual advice by the priestly class who acted as intermediaries between him and his people, his decisions were considered absolute.

The King of Danguk is considered to possess the Mandate of Heaven, being of a godly lineage, granting him numerous authorities. This is why while the King has authority to do almost anything, he must heed his court first, and then consult Gucheon to receive their approval.

Now, with the country's educated literati and scholars taking on titles of nobility as the Yangban caste, they've replaced the animistic priesthood in determining the king's Mandate of Heaven. In the present, the ideal king is considered not a warrior, but a sage among sages. The country has since reformed, beginning an arcane and technological revolution that turned the natural landscape of Asadal into one of the most advanced cities in the world. Educated Bards

and Wizards thrive and alchemists and artificers are awarded with great prestige.

Still, in spite of meritocratic reforms, the Yangban have also instituted a harsh caste system that punishes people of certain backgrounds. The Mudang that once had great authority are among the lowest caste as well as butchers, prostitutes, slaves, and serfs. They are subject to discriminatory policies such as being exempt from the civil service exams that enable changing one's position in the country's class structure. The privilege of nobles materialized most egregiously as cities hoard the country's technological advancements, leaving the countryside farther from it deprived.

The courts of Asadal's monarch are a site of constant feuding between factions of nobles and scholars. The two largest factions in Asadal currently are the **Samjok-O's Covenant Party** and the **Polaris's Beacon Party.** The Beacon Party backs **Grand Prince of Yeongcheon/ Yeongcheondaegun**, the son of the current Queen, whereas the Covenant Party believe **Grand Prince of Muryeong/Muryeongdaegun** still has claim to the throne despite his mother's death. Factional feuds in Danguk are serious affairs as when one faction gains power over the other, purges typically follow.

Education

The **Agency of Sage Arts**, through a council of administrators selected by the **Hall of Worthies**, regulates education through a system of funding based on standardization and prestige. **Asadal Royal University** stands as Danguk's most prestigious research university, requiring all students to demonstrate both exceptional magical talent or understanding of magical theory and moral philosophy that adheres to Luminist thought. Though most yangban boast of having graduated from the Royal University, many of the lower castes seek enrollment as they believe graduating from the university offers a higher chance of passing the gwageo to ascend into the yangban caste. Schools outside of Asadal promise to prepare their students to enroll into the Royal University for that reason.

While some universities outside of Asadal either conform to Asadal's curriculum as their resources allow or focus on other trades or disciplines besides magic, others seek to break the mold entirely. Motivated by philosophies different from Luminism, they do not always adhere to the rigid belief that magic must be channeled toward practical use that benefits the nation. These universities rarely receive more than minimum funding from the Agency of Sage Arts and are subject to greater scrutiny by inspectors appointed by the council from the Hall of Worthies. Rogue tutors, sometimes branded as criminals depending on their ideals, who do not agree with the Luminist monopoly on quality education also teach poor communities in regions far from Asadal's influence.

Technology

As the Sandalwood Tree's roots stretch into the five elemental planes, drawing on them for power, arcanists of Danguk have also discovered the means to harness that power. They've learned how to generate and transfer power through ley lines drawn across the city, giving rise to arcane vehicles that support public transportation and the powering of constructs and machinery that are tasked with the bulk of the city's labor. In recent years, the JM Group pioneered the mass production of household magic items at costs even commoners could afford, improving the general quality of life in Asadal. These revolutionary breakthroughs make the city appear as a veritable utopia to those looking from afar. However, these advancements in the quality of life in Danguk have largely concentrated at the center of the country, with less of these boons spreading further out. Those already living within Asadal rarely see the world beyond the safety of their Sandalwood Tree while those that cultivated talent often move to the city without looking back. Thus, political interests have long deprioritized sparing more resources than necessary to the country's farthest corners.

Cosmology

The Dark Realm (암흑국)

A curious plane that existed long before Gucheon has. The Dark Realm is a plane of infinite darkness where no light can touch. Since the universe has been created, it has been a section among the lower planes that appears to have been beyond the notice of the gods. Believing it to be an empty realm, O-do Jeonryun, one of the Narakwang of Jeoseung, decided that they would dispose of all the sins gathered and cleansed from mortals into the Dark Realm.

The consequences of this decision would only be felt thousands of years later when it became obvious that the Dark Realm was not empty at all. The collected malice and sins of mortals began to form a consciousness. They gathered into an intangible, sentient network of thoughts and desires that spread throughout the Dark Realm until it was molded into something unmistakably humanoid. The first monsters native to the Dark Realm were drawn to Iseung, creating calamities until they were sealed away.

Since then, the gods of Jeoseung and Gucheon worked together to forge a gate, separating the Dark Realm from Iseung forever. They established a divine edict forbidding planar travel between the two realms but still, a link persisted and the Dark Realm continued to gather negative karma from Iseung. People full of hatred and despair such as the Dark Mudang pray someday for the border between the two realms to shatter so that they can herald the Emperor of Darkness, the Dark Realm's will, to cast the world into oblivion.

Notable Figures:

- **The Emperor of Darkness**

Gucheon (구천)

A palace that spans the distance of an entire world, Gucheon is the Realm Above the Heavens where gods and Celestials with the strongest connections to Danguk reside. It is a Lawful Good realm that leans more toward Lawful as though it is a paradise, this paradise is derived from its functionality. Gucheon, meaning "Nine Heavens", represents the highest state of being one can achieve in mortal life: freedoms of clarity and against vexations, heat, and doubt.

Emily Whang

Hwanin, the ruler of Gucheon, rules his plane through a bureaucratic system that functions like near-clockwork. Celestial beings are rewarded through systems of promotions. Of the Realms Above the Heavens, Gucheon is at the same time the closest in proximity to Iseung. The guarantee that all good deeds are justly rewarded relative to the effort put into them is the foundation of Gucheon.

Ripples and tremors from consequential actions are felt there first. The difference in the passage of time between Gucheon and Iseung is also the most minimal out of the other planes. Other gods see it as an administrative zone responsible for observing the affairs of mortals.

Notable Figures:

- **Hwanin**
- **Hwanung**
- **Dangun**

Iseung (이승)

The material world is a realm rife with magic. It is the plane at the center of all existences and all other planes exist as reflections of it. Yet, Iseung is regarded as the lower realm of existence relative to the heavens, full of flaws and blemishes. That these contradictions exist, describing the same space and individuals who have achieved divinity and beyond, is a curiosity. These same qualities have enamored the god Hwanung to descend and live among the mortals that have captivated him.

The affairs of Iseung have been considered neutral territory by both benevolent and malevolent gods in the upper and lower planes. In order to abide by this neutrality, gods do not interfere "directly" in the affairs of mortals. However, Hwanung proposed Danguk as a land that could give rise to a higher quality of souls that can be welcomed into the Realms Above the Heavens. Hwanin permitted his descent and appointed the ministers in charge of new planes to facilitate this new country, initiating what became a system of reincarnation. This was done through the Sandalwood Tree that the gods planted at the center of Danguk altered this. Its roots stretch throughout all of Danguk and absorb the souls of the departed, shielding them from the pre-established order.

From there, the tree delivers these souls to Jeoseung to cleanse them of past sins and memories so that they may be reborn totally anew for another attempt at divinity. After this process, Jeoseung sends these cleansed souls back to the Sandalwood Tree to distribute them as new lives entering Iseung. With this system of reincarnation in place, the gods' efforts to fortify mortal souls into sterner stuff through the challenges and temptations of the mortal realm continue.

The malevolent gods of the lower planes stayed their hands, recognizing hubris in Hwanin and foolishness in Hwanung. Already, the transformation of people who resist entering the reincarnation process into Akryung has given birth to a great number of evil creatures.

Diametrically opposed to the gods and native to Iseung are manifestations of primal rage and furious instinct, the Dragons. Dangun, the first King and half god, signed a pact with the Yongwangs in order to contain the number of Akryung born into Danguk. In exchange for the four dragon kings' help, Gucheon would recognize their authority to rule over regions of the seas.

While they rule over their seas, they must promise not to interfere with the affairs of the land. Likewise, the crime of striking down a Yongwang is akin to killing a god by the laws of Gucheon. The dragon kings accepted this agreement and became allies to mortals in eliminating Akryung numbers.

The names of the **Yongwangs** are as follows:

- **Gwangdeok** of the East
- **Gwangli** of the South
- **Gwangtaek** of the West
- **Gwangyeon** of the North

The Yongwangs have grown proud of essentially being regarded as lesser divinities in the world. Still, they have their own schemes to expand their power and to influence the affairs of man in ways that cannot be easily connected back to them. The dragon kings are ultimately self-motivated creatures who simply have their reasons to promote order.

Jeoseung (저승)

Following Hwanung's descent into Iseung to structure the lives of mortals so that their souls can better reach Gucheon, Hwanin ordered the creation of Jeoseung, meaning literally "that world". Jeoseung is a plane that exists between the upper and lower planes where all those who were born in Danguk are destined to go after the candles of their lives burn out.

Originally, Hwanin appointed ten heavenly hosts to manage this realm called the Narakwang, or the Ten Great Kings. The Narakwang judge and administer punishments to cleanse souls of the malice they've accumulated. By resetting souls in this way, they can be sent back to Danguk to live out new lives.

The names of the **Narakwang** and their duties are as follows:

1. **Jingwang:** Distributes the dead toward their places of judgment through the Samdo River
2. **Chogang:** Punishes swindlers and the violent.
3. **Songje:** Punishes liars.
4. **Ogwan:** Punishes embezzlers and tax evaders.
5. **Yeomra:** Chief divinity of the Ten Narakwang that administers final judgment on all matters. Punishes those who take advantage of generosity.
6. **Byunsung:** Punishes those who committed crimes of hate
7. **Taesan:** Punishes necromancers and those who disrupt the cycle of life
8. **Doshi:** Supervises over the fiends and undead allied with the underworld and punishes the disloyal and unfilial
9. **Pyungdeung:** Punishes those who have committed unspeakable crimes
10. **O-do Jeonryun:** Regulates the cycle of reincarnation

Yeomra represents the Narakwang and speaks on their behalf on critical functions. Though they are members of Gucheon's Heavenly Host, rumors persist that each king first originated as Archfiends before siding with the upper planes.

Jeoseung and the Narakwang perform a critical function for Hwanin in manufacturing the birth of perfect souls.

Over the course of their divine careers, the Narakwang have grown more accustomed to recognizing malice within people rather than actual goodness. Having no reference for mortal lives, they made their standards impossibly high. The figure who would later go on to fill the role of being as a mediator between a mortal soul and the Narakwang would be Princess Bari.

Speaking on behalf of these souls and having the authority to force the adamant Narakwang to listen, she has put reforms into place

Notable figures:

- **The Narakwang**
- **the Jeoseung Saja, the Kkoktu**
- **Notable locations: flower fields of Seocheon**

Blazemalefica

Min Kim

DIVINITIES

The gods that exist in Danguk can be split into multiple categories. Its founders, the masters of the Heavenly Realm of Gucheon, are the sovereign gods that oversee the ones brought to life by its people's faith. Almost every aspect in the life of a regular inhabitant of Danguk has a god associated with it like the Household Gods. Both the faith of the people and the spiritually powerful land enabled the creation of all these relatively new gods and as times and people's material conditions change, more will follow.

For the purpose of this Player's Guide, however, the following gods listed are the major ones that people most commonly worship in Danguk. In addition, Danguk is rife with smaller, localized gods that are bound to the material plane. If players would like, they can create their own household gods (either spirits aligned with their birthplace or ancestors) that they pray to.

LORDS OF GUCHEON

Chilseongshin (칠성신)

The Chilseongshin are seven gods that each represent an individual star of the Seven-Fold Constellation, the Big Dipper. All people have wishes and the work of the Chilseongshin, as appointed by Hwanin, is to hear them and decide whether to approve. This is due to their role as governors of mortals' lifespans with the power to override decisions made even by the Judges of Jeoseung. The wishes directed towards them typically concern health, especially those of children.

In recent years, as Danguk developed a practical form of Astromancy, the number of Chliseongshin followers have grown. The Chilseongshin have begun to communicate more with Astromancers as they observe the constellation they represent. They play an active role imparting new wisdom concerning arcana and medicine. Both operate together to expand the scope of their knowledge to realize the wishes of people as proxies for their masters. In Gucheon, they're revered as sages and well-regarded administrative officials that observe and govern the stars.

The names of the seven gods are Cheonchu, Cheonseon, Cheongi, Cheon'gwon, Oakhyung, Gaeyang, and Yogwang.

Titles: Envoys of the Seven Stars, Root of Astromancy, Seven-Fold Constellation
Alignment: Lawful Neutral
Favored Weapon: Mudang fan
Domain(s): Arcana, Knowledge

Dalnim (달님)

Goddess of the moon, daughter of Hwanin, and sister of Haemosu, Dalnim was originally a goddess of the earth and agriculture. Though Dalnim carried her duties on behalf of Gucheon well, she yearned for something higher. She coveted the shining pearl in the skies, the moon, and desired to capture it for

herself. Her Lunarian followers pass on the legend that Dalnim taught a collection of terrestrial rabbits how to pound mochi. Producing enough, they tied the dough into a long rope to the end of an arrow which Dalnim used to shoot the moon with. Finding she couldn't pull it down to the earth, Dalnim instead climbed it along with her rabbit friends before her servants noticed.

Once crossing the heavens and reaching the moon, Dalnim cut the dough that connected the moon and the earth and established her new home there. Word of Dalnim's exploits spread, inspiring both adventurers and the first astromancers to pursue heights beyond their mortal limitations. Since then, Hwanin and the bureaucracy of Gucheon overlooked Dalnim's brazen escape of the earth and allowed her oversight over her moon and its surrounding stars. Since, as the Dangukese pantheon came into contact with others, Dalnim takes the responsibilities of representing Gucheon to all deities who live on the moon.

Titles: Emissary of the Moon, Moonlight Lady, Rebellious Daughter
Alignment: True Neutral
Favored Weapon: Longbow
Domain(s): Light, Trickery, Twilight

Gameunjang-agi (가믄장 아기)

After a beggar couple gave birth to their third daughter, Gameunjang-agi, their fortunes turned around for the better. When she credited their newfound success to herself, her parents disowned her and her sisters chased her away, bringing untold misfortune back to their homes. Gameunjang-agi was in truth the reincarnation of the Goddess of Karma, Samgong. Though people are purged of their sins prior to reincarnation in Jeoseung, Samgong governs the concept of karma and rewards those who seek to act better than they have been in their previous lives and punishes the wicked and ungrateful.

Following this story, her followers worship her in her reincarnation as Gameunjang-agi, the young girl that was abandoned by her parents, who persevered in the world, rewarding the kindness of strangers. Her existence is a warning to the prideful of the fickle nature of fortune and a source of hope for the down-trodden. Samgong's followers keep a watchful eye for this pride and encourage charity toward those who have nothing.

Titles: Samgong, Governor of Karma
Alignment: Chaotic Neutral
Favored Weapon: Dagger
Domain(s): Forge

Haemosu (해모수)

God of the sun, son of Hwanin, and brother of Dalnim, Haemosu earned glory after slaying a monstrous crow that stole the sun. He wields a sword that shines with the full radiant intensity of the sun's rays and rides a chariot pulled by five dragons. When Hwanung did not return to Gucheon, Haemosu wondered what about the material plane fascinated him. He took to riding his chariot over the lands of Danguk each day and watched the affairs of its insignificant mortals. His excursions bathed the earth with light that germinated crops, earning him worshipers. Clerics sang his praise and people prayed in his name. While Haemosu didn't seek worship, he reveled in it and came to enjoy his trek over the little land. The kingdom of Buyeo formed over his chariot trail and named him their ruler.

During one outing, Haemosu found Yuhwa, the goddess of willow trees, bathing with her sisters in the waters of Ungsim Pond. Haemosu schemed to wed them by luring and entrapping them inside a resplendent mansion he conjured. While he entertained them, his attendants bolted the doors shut. Yuhwa's sisters caught on and escaped, but Haemosu captured Yuhwa and took off to wed her. Habaek, Yuhwa's father and god of Amnok River, fought Haemosu for this outrage in a duel of divine magic, but lost. Yuhwa soon fled on the day they were to return to the heavens. Hwanin forbade Haemosu from returning to the material plane, having lost patience for his interference with mortals and deities of the natural world. Outside of his father's notice, Haemosu sent a ray of sunlight that bathed Yuhwa and impregnated her with Jumong, the future archer king of Goguryeo.

Edicts: build twice for everything you take apart, be true to your whims
Anathema: stay in one place for too long, shirk from your duties
Titles: Sun Herald

Alignment: Neutral
Favored Weapon: Lance
Domain(s): Light, Trickery

Hallakgungi (할락궁이)

The Igong, Gardener of the Fields of Seocheon, once reincarnated as Hallakgungi, the son of a pauper, Sara Doyeong, who was wed to Wongang Ami, the daughter of a wealthy family. They married and had a child, but while Wongang Ami was pregnant, Hwanin appointed Sara Doryeong in a dream as the new Igong. The journey to the realm of the dead was arduous and the two separated with Wongang Ami unable to continue due to her pregnancy. He split apart a comb and told her to give it to their new son, Hallakgungi, should he try to find him. Following that, Wongang Ami went through merciless abuse at the hands of a wealthy man whose hospitality she sought. Trapped and enslaved in the man's house, her son joined her lot after he was born. At the age of fifteen, he pressed Wongang Ami to tell him the identity of his father and escaped to seek the Flower Fields of Seocheon.

The wealthy man pursued Hallakgungi, but failing to capture him, tortured and killed Wongang Ami. After years, the son reunited with father, who was made into the Igong when he found Jeoseong. Learning his mother's fate, he returns with both the Resurrection Flowers to revive her and the Flower of Destruction to exterminate the wealthy man and his family for revenge. This was the first instance that the Flower of Destruction was brought into the world and since, Hallakgungi inherited the position of Igong to make certain such evil cannot seep into the world again.

Several generations have passed and Hallakgungi, the first son of Sara Doryeong, took over the position of Igong when he reached the heavens.

This is the story that followers of the Igong recreate through performance through the Igong Bonpuli to venerate him, keep the dread Flower of Destruction from blooming, and request that he does not harass the departed children appointed by Hwanin to tend to the Field of Seocheon. As god of Flowers, the Igong doesn't have a large following among mortals whose livelihoods are rarely affected by flowers. They mainly consist of druids, fey, gardeners, Halflings, and Elves who give their all to the worship of natural beauty. Regardless, performing the Igong Bonpuli ritual remains a critical practice to ensure peace in Seocheon and to stave off the Flower of Destruction's proliferation into the material plane.

Because the Igong is an appointed position potentially bestowed on any worthy soul, it is the title that carries divinity, rarely its bearer. Their tasks are to tend to the Field and prevent the Flower of Destruction from being released into the world, but the monotony typically turns the current Igong surly.

Titles: Gardener of Paradise, The Igong
Alignment: Neutral
Favored Weapon: Sickle
Domain(s): Nature

Hwanin (환인)

The Supreme Ruler of the Nine Heavenly Realms of Gucheon, Hwanin is the highest deity of Danguk and neighboring nations. He plays a more direct role in guiding the lives of mortals by consulting with state leaders and offering his divine protection to those he deems worthy. Hwanin has existed long before Danguk has and he strives to mold the material world into a Tenth Heaven.

Toward that end, he is a god of bureaucracy who believes that all people have a place in a grand system and they must each receive their just reward for their work. Hwanin, in the spirit of that belief, promotes and keeps mortals and subordinates in line through highly lucrative positions. Most notably, he tamed fierce forces of nature such as the Yongwangs by accepting them into his bureaucracy. It can be said that Hwanin strives to be merely a figurehead of a system he aims to create as above divinity.

Title: Supreme Heavenly Emperor
Alignment: Lawful Good
Favored Weapon: Staff
Domain(s): Arcana, Light, Order

UNDERWORLD KINGS

The Narakwang (나락왕)

While originally they were Fiends, mostly Devils, they found favor with Hwanin who believed their adherence to law could be used for a better purpose. Having proved their loyalty to Hwanin, they were appointed as the Ten Judges of the Dead, the Narakwang. Their tasks suited their brutal nature as they tenderized the collected malice out of dead souls before they were allowed to reincarnate and start their lives anew.

The highest among them, Yeomra, oversees the activities and speaks at the behest of all kings. Yeomra is often depicted as a crowned, horned fiend with a bullish demeanor or a scowling, bearded bureaucrat who sits behind a giant table. Most Clerics of the Narakwang follow Yeomra specifically. They can be found in both local and national halls of justice as ministers and barristers who favor punitive measures. The Narakwang and their followers believe evil to be justified as a measure against evil. Even still, nobody in Danguk fails to quake with terror at the mention of their name.

Titles: Judges of the Dead
Alignment: Lawful Neutral
Favored Weapon: Greatclub
Domain(s): Death, Grave, Order

THE DESCENDED

Hwanung (환웅)

The son of Hwanin lived life trying to compromise between his father's will and his personal wishes. Hwanung was the Supreme God's carefree child who looked down on creation and yearned to be part of it, never wishing to be a god. His plan to move down onto the material plane and justify the move by fulfilling Hwanin's interests succeeded, leading to Danguk's founding and the creation of Asadal, the City of the Gods.

He soon proved to be an adept administrator, if only so he could enjoy more free time for himself. This exact quality of a god who only wished to be mortal endeared his followers to him. Though Hwanung had accepted mortality and passed on, his divinity still lingers across the lands, allowing Clerics to draw power through their faith in him. An aspect of his divinity lingers in Danguk in the form of an Archfey, residing in a mountain distant from the Capital.

Titles: Divinity Among Mortals, Heavenly Regent
Alignment: Neutral Good
Favored Weapon: Shortsword
Domain(s): Knowledge, Life, Nature

MOTHERS OF DANGUK

Honyeo (호녀)

As the Divine Beast who sacrificed her own wish for mortality for her friend, Honyeo prowled the lands, watching over Ungnyeo and Hwanung's children. She accepted her death when her body ossified into the island of Hodamguk. The Sangun were born on the island and continue to revere Honyeo as the mother of their people. Honyeo is regarded as a selfish, prideful goddess, protective of those she regards as her love and kin. Every Sangun is born having heard her edicts and live to the best of their abilities in her stead. The aspect of Honyeo is said to manifest when a thousand Sangun gather in one place.

Edicts: regard the people of Danguk as neighbors and protect them as your own, live according to your desires, shelter the weak and mock the powerful
Anathema: bow to those weaker than you, ignore anyone in danger that you cannot protect, back away from a fight
Titles: Tiger Woman, The Primordial Tiger
Alignment: Chaotic Neutral
Favored Weapon: Claw or jaws
Domain(s): Nature, Tempest

Ungnyeo (웅녀)

Bride of Hwanung, Ungnyeo was a Divine Beast who accepted mortality to be closer to her love and guide her children to a greater future. Ungnyeo has been deified as one of the matron deities of Danguk's Mudang and Black Bear Clan. As she has offered her wisdom to several lines of kings, the Mudang channels her spirit to gain her advice and strength. Cults of motherhood have been built around Ungnyeo among dwarvish clans to never forget her lasting presence in founding the country. When

Ungnyeo manifests, it is in the form of an imposing Dwarven Queen who wears around her a living Bear hide.

Edicts: live true to your love, eliminate malice and hate in yourself and around you, let your personal success and enrichment of your community be the same
Anathema: covet material goods over people, harm any mother or child
Titles: Bear Woman, Dowager Queen, Holy Mother, Mother of Dwarves, The Primordial Bear
Alignment: Neutral Good
Favored Weapon: Flail
Domain(s): Nature, Twilight

THE ASCENDED

Moksaka (목샤카)

A mortal who had become a sage in his lifetime, they ascended into godhood by transcending suffering and desire while alive. After transcending the mortal coil and becoming a god, they passed on teachings meant to assist in achieving a state of awakening and freeing one's self from suffering. He preaches that only by obtaining this state of awakening, can mortals achieve an existence free from all desire. Following the first years of his ascension, Moksaka disappeared from the world, leaving behind residual divine power that manifests in the realm of gods. It's believed that this icon bestows divine magic to his Clerics, Monks, and Paladins.

Moksaka believes in a state of being even higher than those of the gods, as they are far from free of desire or suffering. Above all existing planes mortals are capable of traversing into, a grander layer of the world, Akasha, exists that one can only reach when their souls have shed all attachments. Followers believe their teacher reached this realm, leaving behind a lingering aspect of divinity. This aspect performs divine interventions on behalf of the original's worshipers.

Clerics pray to "all things and nothing", seeking the same serenity that Moksaka achieved. These efforts provide them with their spells to assist fellow mortals. Some gods, mostly lawful in nature, have learned to tolerate Moksaka's rise, seeing competition, but deities of passion and indulgence seek to defy his students at every turn.

Edicts: Strive for physical and mental discipline. Seek understanding of one's personal state and the surrounding world. Liberate others from desire and temptation.
Anathema: Refrain from taking life. Refrain from taking what is not given. Refrain from carnal pleasures. Refrain from speaking deceitfully. Refrain from intoxicants that cloud the mind.
Titles: Exalted Sage, Sage of Enlightenment
Alignment: Neutral Good
Favored Weapon: Unarmed strikes
Domain(s): Life, Peace

Dangun (단군)

As the first mortal, Dwarvish king of a united Danguk, the entirety of Dangun's rule was spent ensuring the stability of his young nation. He led a golden era where all people of Danguk were united as neighbors and countrymen, but also a period of turbulence as fear of death led to the birth of the first Akryung. Though Dangun had been deified and ascended following his death, his worshippers grew only after the country's fracturing. They prayed to him for his leadership in reuniting his people once again.

In the present day, Dangun is a deity of both politicians and military leaders who seek to create or recreate an ideal kingdom of the gods. His most fervent followers believe him to be a single entity, an incarnation of Hwanung and Hwanin, as governor of mortals and the heavens. When faith in the current king wanes, the followers of the founder god pray that he returns to once again take the throne.

Edict: Place the needs of your country over yourself, defend your neighbors and village from invaders, punish traitors, lessen the burden of those that labor the hardest
Anathema: Betray your fellow countrymen, become or raise the undead
Titles: The Founder, Son of Heaven
Alignment: Lawful Neutral
Favored Weapon: Pike
Domain(s): Forge, Order

Jumong (주몽)

The founding Orcish monarch of Goguryeo, he was blessed with uncanny accuracy. Founder of a new Dynasty. He's a half-god born to a union between Haemosu, king of Buyeo during the Fractured Era and Lady Yuhwa, daughter of the god of Amnok River, Habaek. He was doted on and became spoiled in his youth to the envy of his step-brothers. They plotted against him to protect their inheritance and had him exiled from court. Jumong left on a journey of self-discovery and realized his lineage as son of Haemosu, accepting his dream of unifying Danguk once again after the Zhu Empire's invasion.

He formed the country of Goguryeo after reuniting all the scattered tribes in Buyeo into Goguryeo. Jumong used his rule to revolt against Zhu and with the combined armies of all tribes, conquered their regional Commandery. Jumong's dream of reunification persisted through generations as rulers of all regions inherited this will. This wish and his leadership deified him as an ancestral god.

Edicts: Be generous in victory, honor your siblings, strike swiftly and decisively
Anathema: Hold grudges, act without purpose, hoard your treasures
Titles: The Archer King, Dongmyeong of Goguryeo, Holy King of the East, The Unifier
Alignment: Chaotic Good
Favored Weapon: Gakgung
Domain(s): Peace, War

Koenegitto

The demigod son of a regional deity revered in a shrine, Sochonguk, and a mortal woman, Baek Junim, Koenegitto's temperament rocked Danguk. At the age of three, he flew into a rage whenever someone disparaged his lowborn mother. He became like a natural disaster that razed villages and towns in his path. When even seasoned warriors couldn't stop him, Sochonguk locked him inside of a chest and threw it into the seas. Sochonguk doubted that the chest could hold him, but used the means to keep his son safe where he couldn't harm anyone else. In the meantime, he asked the western Yongwang to watch over the boy and raise him well.

Keonegitto, as predicted, broke free from the chest. Life in the seas agreed with him as he met the Yongwang's youngest daughter. The two rivaled each other in terms of strength and Koenegitto delighted to have a friend that could keep up with his abilities. The two married, but the Yongwang asked Koenegitto to leave when his vast hunger drained the kingdom's food supplies. They returned to the surface during Dangun's rule when the Emperor of Darkness ravaged the lands. Koenegitto and his wife joined the battles and fought the Akryung, earning him his place as a god of war in the Dangukese pantheon. His divine powers, embodied in a bronze gong, could summon warriors from the past and future to battle his enemies. Though considered a hero, Koenegitto's temperament ensured he would always butt heads with other generals and deities. At the end of his life, he avenged his childhood self by scaring both his parents to death, demoting his father to a mountain ridge and ascending his mother into a shrine spirit.

Edicts: always finish a fight, answer the call to battle, never let a score go unsettled, live to your heart's content
Anathema: turn the other cheek, oppress those weaker than you, entrap or prolong others' misery
Titles: Raging Wargod
Alignment: Chaotic Neutral
Favored Weapon: Jangchang
Domain(s): Tempest, War

Princess Bari (바리공주)

Princess Bari, or the Abandoned Princess, is the matron deity of all Mudang in Danguk. Her role as governess of the departed gives her authority over the Jeoseung Saja, the psychopomps that guide souls to the realm of the dead. She has a kind face representing the peaceful rest that comes with passing away naturally. Princess Bari originally ascended to divinity after saving her birth parents who had abandoned her by sneaking into Jeoseung and the Flower Fields of Seocheon, representing also filial piety and the first act of a Mudang interceding over death to heal. All Mudang give thanks and prayer to her when they perform a ritual to channel the spirits of the dead.

Edicts: soothe others over the inevitability of death, purify the undead that cling to the world, save others who experience spiritual possession and welcome new initiates
Anathema: use profane means to prolong your existence, betray or abandon those you share bonds with, place yourself above another
Titles: Mother of the Mudang
Alignment: Neutral Good
Favored Weapon: Dagger
Domain(s): Grave, Life, Twilight

Yongwangs

The Four Yongwangs, the Dragon Kings, are sovereigns of the seas based in the four cardinal directions of Danguk. Before Dangun's birth, they were the strongest of the sea dragons whose territories and followings were vast enough to function as kingdoms. They warred with each other for supremacy, often dragging mortals into their conflicts, but they've since begun cooperating upon accepting divinity.

The people of Danguk pray to them for protection before heading into the seas, fearing their primal rage which once destroyed shoreside towns and villages. Farmers further in the lands have become members of their cult, praying for fertility in their lands. The Yongwangs are that of the only gods that exist in the mortal realm, but their control over the seas and the creatures that they have earned the title regardless. They rule from the Ocean Palaces, the undersea realm of the Dragon Kings, and wage war against those that would spoil their waters.

Edicts: destroy evil and those that would pollute the seas, share in the bounties of the seas, honor the generosity of the Dragon Kings, punish prideful and arrogant metallic and chromatic dragons
Anathema: dirty the waters of the seas, bow to another dragon, fish more than what you need from the seas
Titles: The Dragon Kings of the Seas, Rage Incarnate
Alignment: Lawful Neutral
Favored Weapon: Trident
Domain(s): Arcana, Nature, Tempest

HOUSEHOLD GODS

Ancestor Worship

The work of mortals is not finished in their current life. At times, the gods have need of them in the afterlife and elevate them into positions of higher office in the beyond. Because death is merely passage from one plane of existence to another, until a soul reenters the cycle of reincarnation, the people of Danguk have come to revere and worship deceased generations of their family who have performed great deeds. They hope to receive favor from their ancestors who watch over them to prevail over the hardships they face. By achieving fragments of divinity through filial worship, these mortal spirits gained the power to answer their loved ones' prayers. These prayers include granting fortune for themselves or misfortune to their rivals, health through times of illness, and support through more advanced rituals against adversarial spirits or gods. The spirit sickness that many Mudang undergo can be traced to their ancestor spirits visiting them.

Ancestor worship has grown so popular in Danguk that every house that can manage it has a shrine built for their family. Clerics that worship their ancestors
primarily and other gods secondarily are not uncommon.

Edicts: continue accruing valor for your family name, conduct yourself admirably in all settings
Anathema: act in such a way that would embarrass your lost family as if they were watching, betray any living family member
Titles: Venerations of one's ancestors
Alignment: Any
Favored Weapon: Any
Domain(s): Any one

Variant: Local Deity

Clerics can worship sets of localized deities native to either where they grew up or their adopted homes. While these gods aren't powerful enough to grant followers outside of their region magic, they can perform the duties of any well-established deities to their existing servitors. Work with your GM to create a new set of edicts and anathema and make sure what works best for both your character's backstory, the setting, and what they're comfortable with allowing.

Eopshin (업신)

The goddess of wealth and the house's storage room, Eopshin is among the Household Gods that protect the house. She's unique in that she appears in an animal form, embodying an appearance that is the bane of vermin. Her followers typically keep a pet snake in their storage room as a sign of her presence in their home. They pray to her for good wealth and believe seeing her in their dreams is an omen that they will soon experience money problems.

Edicts: maintain a storage room or keep your wealth inside chests and baskets, keep to a frugal lifestyle, punish thieves and crooks
Anathema: harm snakes, weasels, toads, spiders, or any beast that preys on vermin, use your wealth in a way that brings harm to others
Titles: Goddess of Storage and Wealth, Goddess of Professions, Serpent Mother
Alignment: Chaotic Good
Favored Weapon: Rapier
Domain(s): Nature

Jeongrang Gakshi (정랑 각시)

Jeongrang Gakshi appears as a beautiful, young woman with flowing hair as long as she is tall. Her jealous feud with the Hearthmother, Jowangshin, earned Hwanin's ire and she was exiled as the goddess of the outhouse. For acolytes of other deities, this incident acted as a divine decree to maintain hygiene and promote mutual health. But Jeongrang Gakshi despised the self-righteous deities for stripping her of her authority as a former goddess of the hearth.

She directed her rage at children in particular. If a child falls into a toilet pit, people believe that she pulled them in and used the opportunity to curse them to die before adulthood. Those that worship her do so in hopes of quelling her anger or to enable her worst qualities. Some paladins succeed in channeling her powers and redirecting them toward retribution against wrongdoers. For this, though Jeongrang Gakshi is an evil goddess, other gods still see her presence as a necessary evil.

Edicts: take care of your hair, create waste and litter frequently, take vengeance against those who wrong you, let no wrong go unpunished
Anathema: use an outhouse on any day that ends with a 6, cough three times before entering an outhouse, forgive others without recompense, honor Jowangshin, tolerate another's self-righteousness
Titles: Toilet Goddess, Outhouse Bride
Alignment: Neutral Evil
Favored Weapon: Battle Axe
Domain(s): Death

Jowangshin (조왕신)

Goddess of Fire and the Hearth, Jowangshin is the patron deity of all spouses who work in the home. She is the goddess of the kitchen who oversees the health of the entire home so that its residents can be in peak condition to contribute to the world. Jowangshin does not forbid her followers from worshipping other deities and generally has the most lax rules concerning what they do outside of the hearth. However, she's known to be strict and merciless when it comes to conduct in her hearth, being capable of rebelling against Hwanin or gods above her if they break her taboos. Jowangshin is otherwise a benevolent deity whose followers believe maintaining the cardinal rules of hospitality preserve peace in society.

She embodies a clay altar placed above a hearth where her followers awake every morning to pour a bowl of fresh water into.

Edict: Always feed someone who asks you for food, embrace and treat strangers and guests as friends, resolve conflicts through peaceful means where possible
Anathema: Do not curse while in the hearth, do not sit on the hearth, do not place your feet on the hearth, maintain cleanliness in the kitchen
Titles: Hearthmother
Alignment: Neutral
Favored Weapon: Dagger
Domain(s): Hearth, Order, Peace

Munshin (문신)

In certain areas of Danguk, the Munshin are regarded as the highest of the Household Gods, even surpassing Seongjushin. As god of doorways, the Munshin can allow or prevent the passage of various beings and concepts. Their followers worship the Munshin to prevent the passage of diseases and

omens from entering houses. The Munshin are a union of door gods among the Household Gods that rule over each specific door inside a house. Whenever people entered or left a building, they would pray to the Munshin for protection.

It's believed that through their power, vampires cannot enter areas they are not welcomed into.

Edicts: Close the door after entering or leaving a building, fix any doors or locks that are broken under appropriate circumstances, keep a watchful eye for rogues and trespassers in your home or a building you're welcomed into
Anathema: Destroy locks or doors of someone's homes, trespass without invitation
Titles: Gods of Doorways, Lords of Architecture
Alignment: Lawful Good
Favored Weapon: Mace
Domain(s): Forge, Order

Samshin Halmoni (三神 할머니)

The Samshin Halmoni is a trio of goddesses that rule over childbirth and fate. All three goddesses appear as elderly women each with different duties: the first protects the pregnant mother, the second ensures that the birth is safely performed, and the third watches over the child until they reach adolescent age. Her followers typically consist of midwives, mothers, and childless women, but every house in a village keeps an altar to the Samshin Halmoni in the form of an earthenware pot, filled with rice and sealed. Festivals would be held in their honor to ensure the safety of the village's children.

While they dote on children, the Samshin Halmoni are strict with irresponsible adults.

Edicts: Protect children and be a good influence to them, be attentive to the needs of women and mothers, take up habits positive to your health
Anathema: Bring harm to women and children, abandon your responsibilities to your family or community, invite evil spirits in to the world
Titles: Three Goddess Grandmothers, Tripartite Midwives
Alignment: Neutral Good
Favored Weapon: Handaxe
Domain(s): Life, Peace

Seonangshin (서낭신)

Those who wish to invoke the spirit of the Seonangshin in their village construct a stone tower, tablet, or house in their name. The Seonangshin is the patron deity of an individual village. They appear mostly as women clad in full armor and protect villages from disease and misfortune. Though they are the weakest of the Household Gods, they appear in multitudes in each village, serving as their personal war gods (though they're more akin to foot soldiers than generals). It's said travelers spit near a cairn representing the Seonanshin as they pass by because the gods feed on saliva.

Edicts: Protect your neighbors and friends, always return a favor in kind, look out for the weakest among you, build a stone cairn on roads that you travel
Anathema: Ignore someone in trouble when you could have helped them, steal from others, use magic that corrupts minds
Titles: Village Deity, Little Soldier
Alignment: Lawful Good
Favored Weapon: Spear
Domain(s): Order, War

Seongjushin

The Seongjushin is the highest god of the house, representing its construction and structure. As the god of the building and the deity of architecture, all operations of the house including those of the other gods fall under Seongjushin's judgment. Depending on how well the residents of the house treat him, he uses his authority to attract more fortune and wealth to the home and wards against disease, adding years to their lives. Fundamentally, the Seongjushin is a god of luck whose power only grows alongside the rest of his pantheon.

More than anything else, the Seongjushin despise homes that have been abandoned. Their more powerful Clerics are ordered to house those that lack shelter in these homes or none can be found, build a home if possible. Empty houses drain the Seongjushin's power while houses that have mortals tending to them expands it.

Edict: House the homeless, let nothing go to waste, perform regular maintenance in buildings and all crafted material

Anathema: Abandon a building, spurn a genuine plea for help
Titles: Owner of the House, Household Guardian
Alignment: Lawful Neutral
Favored Weapon: Light Hammer
5e Domain(s): Forge, Knowledge

Teojushin

The Teojushin is the patron deity of the foundation upon which the house is built. As the house is being constructed, the Teojushin comes to life in excitement over the fortune to gather atop the ground. Unlike the other Household Gods, the Teojushin is known for her avarice. Unless the house is built properly, it's feared that Teojushin could swallow the home whole. To keep this from happening, the people of Danguk would fill a pot with rice cakes, peas, or red beans, cover it with a cone-shaped umbrella of rice stalks, and bury the pot into the ground. The pot itself then represents the goddess's material vessel. While the goddess believes she has a stake to maintain in the house, she will protect it alongside the other Household Deities. Where the Seongjushin fails in its duties, the Teojushin compensates.

Edicts: Devote your all to the prosperity of your home, hoard your valuables, treat charity with suspicion
Anathema: Bury into the floor of your home, give to others more than what you would receive
Titles: Goddess of Foundations, Avaricious Pot
Alignment: Neutral
Favored Weapon: Maul
5e Domain(s): Forge, Trickery

GOD OF NATURE

Sanshin

The beauty of mountains as they reached into the heavens have fascinated the hearts of mortals and inspired awe. That inspiration has created a vacuum of faith that worthy spirits have filled to become Sanshin, Mountain Gods. These deities represent the mountains and the spirits that inhabit them. They communicate with travelers who venture up the mountains to meditate and seek enlightenment, teaching or testing them depending on their mood. Their worshippers build shrines or altars at the base of the mountains to appease the god above.

In the world of nature spirits, the Sanshin serve as lords or magistrates under Hwanin's service. Their true role is to oversee the astral and ethereal planes bordering the material plane and Gucheon accessible from the peaks. To that end, they appoint and charge Clerics to investigate and deal with potential disturbances.

Edicts: Meditate often, protect the astral and ethereal planes, assist struggling travelers wherever you meet them
Anathema: Lose yourself over unimportant matters, knowingly bring pandemonium into places of peace, pollute the lands
Titles: Gatekeeper of the Heavens, Mountain Deities, Dukes of Spirits
Alignment: Chaotic Neutral
Favored Weapon: Glaive
Domain(s): Knowledge, Nature

PHILOSOPHIES

Luminism

Luminism deifies the pursuit of moral governance itself and believes it is best embodied in the bonds that people share with one another: between kings and their subjects, parents and children, neighbors and fellow neighbors. To forge and strengthen these material bonds will elevate both the living world and the heavens above. Luminists put their beliefs into practice, entering government as studied scholar-sages to guide the world around them toward harmony. Through learning comes wisdom and the only type of faith that matters is one that improves the lives of people.

Schools, universities, and halls of government serve as temples for Luminists and its clergy consists of teachers who strive to share their ethics and expertise. Luminists are apathetic towards gods, and believe mortals should govern themselves and guide the people with a heavy hand to follow the code of ethics. Other faiths view Luminism as shallow, a cult of the flesh that does nothing to prepare the state of one's soul for the journey that comes after life. In either case, Luminism is the guiding philosophy of

the powerful in Danguk.

Titles: The Sacred Secular
Alignment: Any Lawful
Favored Weapon: Staff
Domain(s): Arcana, Knowledge, Order

EVILS OF THE WORLD

The Emperor of Darkness

The desire of mortals to bring harm and misfortune onto others accumulates into a form of energy called malice. When malice, the pollution of the soul, is allowed to gather in large quantities within the Dark Realm, it resembles something like faith, which allows gods to exist. That same power brings to life the Emperor of Darkness, a shapeless entity of pure malice that exists as a nihilistic engine that seeks little else besides spreading unending suffering throughout the universe. Its worshippers pray for it to curse and bring ruin to their enemies, but it possesses no sentience or intelligence of its own. The spite that its believers already hold in their hearts draws it to them, granting them power often at the cost of being consumed by their hate.

Though the Emperor of Darkness possesses power of creation and destruction akin to the Supreme God Hwanin, its lack of intelligence keeps it from tapping into its full potential. The Emperor's followers continue to work toward the day when a vessel can accept all of its fell power and direct it against the gods above.

Titles: Malice, Remnant of Chaos
Alignment: Chaotic Evil
Favored Weapon: Sickle
Domain(s): Death, War, Trickery

Mara

Mara, Lord of Desire, is a Demon Lord representing carnal pleasure. They have been responsible for the fall of countries and civilizations into decadence at the expense of mortal lives. Mara feels no greater joy beyond corrupting heroes and sages to degenerate into lust. Because their schemes are often disguised in pleasing visages and tantalizing whispers, the consequences are often too late to stave off. Anyone who surrenders their wills to desire and depravity shows faith to Mara, even without putting a name to the Demon Lord.

Mara's physical form changes to reflect the tastes of anyone beholding them, typically humanoid. Few mortals have beheld their true form besides Moksaka who has abandoned their desires. Having ascended to divinity by rejecting his temptations, Mara feels particular obsession with thwarting the sage's followers. Ironically, it's through competition with Moksaka that gave Mara a meaning beyond as a mere Demon Lord. Any devotee of the divine seeking to transcend the boundaries of flesh must eventually confront Mara and far more have failed than succeeded.

Titles: Lord of Desire
Alignment: Neutral Evil
Favored Weapon: Scimitar
Domain(s): Nature, Trickery

Sobyeolwang (소별왕)

Sobyeolwang the Usurper is a primordial titan that has existed before the creation of the world. He was one of the few that assisted in the creation of the world, bringing to life the first giants. When the work was complete, Sobyeolwang beheld the gods' finished masterpiece and desired to possess it for himself. In the days following completion, Sobyeolwang challenged the gods to a series of contests to determine control over the world. Though Sobyeolwang lost the first two, he rigged the third. For several years, the world plunged into a paradise exclusively for the titan, terrorizing its creatures and shattering landscapes.

For his deception, the gods turned against Sobyeolwang regardless of the terms of their agreement and sealed him away. Few remember the episode with Sobyeolwang the Usurper except the giants who pass on stories of the golden time the world was theirs. Quietly, Sobyeolwang continues to whisper commands into the ears of his priests, eagerly awaiting the day he can take back his beautiful world.

Title: Demiurge, The Usurper, the Sealed God
Alignment: Neutral
Favored Weapon: Greatsword
Domain(s): Tempest, Trickery

BACKGROUNDS

To give you a sense of which walks of life people in Danguk come from, take a look at the following backgrounds. You aren't restricted to these choices as your character will join the Black Bear Clan under their unique circumstances, of course.

Existing Backgrounds can be adapted to suit the setting of Danguk. For example, an Entertainer in Danguk would be a Gwangdae, a traveling performer who plays often for common folk, skilled with mask plays and feats of acrobatics. Spy would be an excellent substitute for a Royal Investigator, an agent for the crown tasked with tracking acts of sedition by nobles. There's no single, correct way of representing Danguk and broadly, a fantasy story based on Korean history.

ASTROLOGIAN

Skill Proficiencies: Arcana, Perception
Tool Proficiencies: Cartographer's Tools or Navigator's Tools
Languages: One of your choice
Equipment: Abacus, star chart, robes, lamp, a quill, bottle of black ink
Feature: Stellar Literacy

You have spent years studying the skies allowing you to recognize basic constellations and specific stars. You have a general idea of what time of the day it is and you do not need a compass to determine which direction is north while in the Material Plane.

Suggested Characteristics

While scholars are generally prized in Danguk, an Astrologian is valued particularly for their ability to divine the future even without the need for magic. They record any changes and patterns to stars from their observatories and universities and write reports on the current state of the planes. The heavens inspire those in your field and they desire to understand the grand phenomena of the universe.

BAEKJEONG

Skill Proficiencies: Animal Handling or Intimidation, and Athletics
Tool Proficiencies: Leatherworkers' Tools, or Weaver's Tools
Languages: One of your choice
Equipment: Common clothes, hammer, lamp, a set of leatherworkers' tools, shovel
Feature: Beast Tamer

You've tended to livestock all your life as part of your upbringing, performing a responsibility that has ostracized both you and your family from polite society. You have Advantage on Animal Handling checks used to calm a violent Beast.

Alternative Feature: Executioner

Your background in slaughtering animals has forced you to serve the state as an executioner. Years of service culling the lives of the irredeemable has given you a grim presence. Though your profession may not reflect your principles, people underestimate you. Opponents rolling for a contested ability check against you outside of physical contests have Disadvantage.

Suggested Characteristics: Baekjeong are part of the lowest caste in Danguk by either their occupation or those of their parents. Unlike serfs, a Baekjeong still has freedom over their business, handling meat in ways society deems unclean. They can either seek to escape their lot in life or better their and their loved ones' conditions. Their difficult lives in an unjust, discriminatory society can also motivate them to try and rebel against it.

CULINARIAN

Skill Proficiencies: Sleight of Hand, and Medicine or Survival
Tool Proficiencies: Cook's Utensils
Languages: One of your choice
Equipment: A set of cook's utensils, bottles of soy sauce and cooking oil, vials of spices, traveler's clothes, recipe book, iron pot, a pouch containing 5 gp
Feature: An Unforgettable Meal

The quality of your cooking can reach people's hearts. You can substitute a Charisma check made to improve the attitude of another creature with an ability check using Cook's Utensils.

Suggested Characteristics

Culinarians fostered a passion for cooking and constantly seek to improve their dishes. They can be found as travelers, seeking new, regional dishes to expand their palate. In Danguk, the common people respect Culinarians that cook and provide for communities and often pool their ingredients to enjoy the luxuries of an extraordinary meal. Nobles and Kings seek out Culinarians to keep their talents.

MUDANG

Skill Proficiencies: Nature, Performance
Tool Proficiencies: Drum or another musical instrument
Languages: One of your choice
Equipment: A holy symbol, book of songs and chants, collection of bells like rattles, costume, a pouch full of 50 talisman slips

Feature: Spirit Sensitivity

You've been possessed by a spirit in your earlier years and that experience has awakened inside you sensitivity to the occult. While this feature does not allow you to detect the location of Celestials, Fiends, or the Undead, they must succeed on a Dexterity (Stealth) check against your Passive Perception if they step within 60 ft of you. On a failure, the GM tells you in secret that a creature of one of the three Types is nearby.

Suggested Characteristics

In Danguk's past, the people revered and counted on the Mudang to exorcise the Akryung rampant in the lands. Those halcyon days are long gone and though the target resents them for past circumstances, they continue their work to maintain stability between the material and the spiritual realms. A Mudang doesn't choose to become one. Their power either awakens following a possession by a spirit or through training. One of the duties of a Mudang is to help these people through and occasionally, they choose to join their ranks. If a Mudang isn't particularly heroic and gung-ho about protecting people, this background represents for them a means of making end's meet.

SEX WORKER

Skill Proficiencies: Deception or Persuasion, and Performance
Tool Proficiencies: A Gaming Set or a Musical Instrument
Languages: One of your choice
Equipment: A set of fine clothes, book of poetry, norigae and perfume, a pouch of 5 gp

Feature: Cultured Courtesan

Despite your hard-scrabble upbringing, you've been trained diligently in fine arts and poetry to impress your high society patrons. You know the ins and outs of the gentry, local laws and hierarchies, and are sought after by nobles. Your experience gives you Advantage on Charisma (Deception or Persuasion) checks to improve the attitudes of a noble.

Suggested Characteristics

Sex workers occupy the lowest caste in Danguk society alongside other entertainers and baekjeong, but their access to high society gives them privileges few can enjoy. Their class is viewed with disgust, but individually can garner the popularity of a local celebrity. Being part of both these worlds can influence a sex worker to use their position to better the lives of common people or seek to escape the bonds of their class.

TIGER HUNTER

Skill Proficiencies: Athletics, Survival
Tool Proficiencies: Leatherworker's Tools or Tinker's Tools
Languages: One of your choice
Equipment: Hunting trap, bag of caltrops, common clothes, hempen rope (50 ft.), a purse containing 10 gp

Feature: Toss a Coin

You're counted on by your community to dispatch wild beasts and even monsters threatening travelers. Out of respect for your trade, commoners will offer you free lodging and come and tip you off about any suspicious sightings of potentially dangerous creatures.

Suggested Characteristics

Despite what the title implies, Tiger Hunters contend with not just tigers, but any dangerous monster threatening the peace in an area. The life you lead is dangerous and you're unlikely to become wealthy, but the common people count on you for their safety. Tiger Hunters end up being conscripted by the military to see their skills used against armies of rival nations, but some become recluses.

YANGBAN

Skill Proficiencies: Arcana or History and Performance
Tool Proficiencies: Calligrapher's Supplies
Languages: One of your choice
Equipment: One set of Calligrapher's Supplies, a set of fine clothes, a clan stamp, a purse containing 25 gp

Feature: Civil Servant

Your status in society as someone who has passed the civil service examinations offers you privileges by the state. You have access into the halls of power such as government buildings, but your presence in underprivileged areas can draw unwanted attention.

Suggested Characteristics

Though you were born to a wealthy family, your early life wasn't easy. To keep your family's rank, you were expected to study poetry, literature, history, and other disciplines in the hopes of passing the state's civil service exams. A Yangban is a powerful literati that is expected to be filial to both family and king and act as a moral exemplar, though some believe they are moral by nature of their rank.

TIMELINE

Pre-History

Before 0: The land later known as Danguk isolates the Primordial Beasts, immortal creatures born from remnants of chaos leftover from the world's creation, from the rest of the world. Owing no allegiance to the gods due to believing that they were created by the planet itself, they lived solitary lives. Humanoids, largely humans, halflings, orcs, dragonborns, and elves, form disparate tribes to protect each other from the island's harsh climates. They worshiped the Primordial Beasts as the strongest expressions of nature and to plead for mercy in living in their territories. More extreme tribes formed cults around these beasts, declaring themselves to be the children of certain Beasts, and warred with other tribes.

Founding Era

0: Hwanung, who discerns potential in the strength of the humanoids who have lived without the gods' blessings for so long, descends into the young land with his Ministers of Clouds, Rainfall, and Winds. In doing so, he accepts a demotion from his divine status as deity to an archfey. Hwanung imparts first onto the Primordial Bear's tribe techniques to build civilization such as agriculture and bestows gifts of grain.

1: The Primordial Bear challenges the upstart Hwanung who dares encroach on her territories and meddle in the affairs of her mortals. Hwanung wrestles and defeats the Primordial Bear in physical combat as demonstration of his strength and conviction. The Primordial Bear acknowledges Hwanung's power, convincing her closest allies, including the Primordial Tiger, to heed him.

5: Hwanung first plants the seeds of the divine Sandalwood Tree. He promises that should mortals practice his wisdom, they can grow the tree and someday join the ranks of the gods.

21: Mortal tribes begin to relocate in the lands surrounding the tree, which grows into the City of the Gods, Asadal. Other Primordial Beasts take notice of humanoids allying with Hwanung and congregating to the country's center. The Primordial Fox accuses Hwanung for spearheading a scheme by the gods to destroy or tame the Beasts.

50: The Sandalwood Tree seed blooms, instituting the new system of reincarnation that allows mortal souls to return to Danguk after death. The Primordial Beasts change their perception of mortals from weak, individual creatures to a vast, infinitely replenishing colony.

200: Mortals flourish and wield divine powers that elevate among them heroes who can challenge and defeat the Primordial Beasts. They are hailed as the first heroes of Danguk, but bloodshed intensifies in the coming century. Mortal tribes still siding with their Primordial Beasts organize attacks against the new mortal towns and city.

350: Hwanung, representing the mortals, signs a pact of coexistence with the Beasts: the Sandalwood Tree has grown to sustain in its roots several demiplanes (including the new Underworld of Jeoseung). He will grant the Beasts that desire isolation and their followers a coexistent demiplane resembling the country to thrive in without divine interference. They will have 100 years to determine their fates before Hwanung closes the gates between the Material Plane and the demiplane.

450: Most Primordial Beasts choose to leave for the Beast Demiplane with their followers. Some choose to live alongside Hwanung, seeing potential in the futures that the mortals can build for their lands. Few others, like the Primordial Fox, continue to struggle against Hwanung to seize back their lands.

504: Mortal heroes slay the Primordial Fox, annihilating her soul. Her tribe, who inherited her blood, disband and integrate into mortal civilization or escape into the wilds, vowing vengeance. They form the Fox Clan, transforming into the first Gumihos. A centuries' reign of peace begins with all of the mortals in the lands for the first time united under Hwanung's guidance.

1000: The Primordial Tiger and Primordial Bear requested Hwanung for mortality, wishing to live, die, and follow their loved ones into a peaceful afterlife. Tiger surrendered her chance to Bear, acknowledging her love for Hwanung, and left Danguk. The Bear, now Ungnyeo, married Dangun.

1086: Dangun, the first mortal king, was born. The Tiger's travels end and she accepts eternal slumber. Her body petrified and turned into the island of Hodamguk where the Sangun people were born.

1111: Hwanung abdicated the throne and allowed his form to dissipate into spiritual matter to be scattered into the winds.

1616: The combined malice of the vengeful Primordial Beasts and defeated tribes grow and spread across the lands, possessing others as Akryung. Dangun raises an army to battle the Akryung.

1617: Dangun beseeched the heavens who gave him their full support. He makes a pilgrimage to all corners of Danguk to sign pacts with the Yongwangs to contain the Undead threat. A policy of isolation is implemented.

1620: Dangun chooses to sacrifice himself and abdicates the throne, following his father's footsteps. He allows his mortal form to wither and his spirit ascends as a Mountain God to protect his people from the Akryung.

1630: Noble families begin to split on the question of the country's isolation policy, deviating from Dangun's vision. Cultivators of Long Xin make contact with Danguk nobles and exchange resources and ideas secretly.

1640: Princess Bari, the seventh daughter, was born and abandoned to die by the new king. She was found by an elderly couple.

1653: Princess Bari sets out to meet her real parents.

1656: Princess Bari, upon finding her parents cursed by an untreatable disease, sets out on her quest into Jeoseong.

1669: Princess Bari returns from Jeoseong to find her real parents deceased. She uses the Resurrection Flowers to bring them back for a second chance at life. Her deeds became an inspiration among Mudang serving the country.

1700: Princess Bari passes away and ascends to divinity. She becomes the goddess of the Jeoseong Saja and organizes the country's Mudang into the Black Bear Clan. Predicting that the system of reincarnation through punishment instituted by the gods will someday generate an untameable amount of malice, she imbues the Mudang with powers to cleanse mortal resentment through absolution.

1740: Advances in pottery and intensive agriculture lead to the height of Danguk's Bronze Age. More demigods of the hearth ascend coinciding with increased advancements surrounding pottery.

1890: Ungnyeo passed on, satisfied with the peace and prosperity the nation achieved. She ascends to the rank of a divine spirit, worshiped by Mudang, Druids, and Clerics.

2340: A rift into the Dark Realm opens. All the Akryung in Danguk are compelled to gather into a single mortal vessel. An avatar of the Emperor of Darkness is born, taking the shape of a fierce hound with the power to consume the stars. The Black Bear Clan struggle against the collective grudges of Danguk.

2342: The people of Hodamguk entered Danguk to help fight the Emperor of Darkness. The Yongwangs sent emissaries and warriors into Danguk as well.

2344: The Emperor is slain by the combined efforts of Danguk, Hodamguk, and the Yongwang. Hwanin admonishes the Narakwang for allowing the creation of the Emperor and orders the Dark Realm to be sealed off from any means of interplanar travel.

Fractured Era

2420: The trauma from the years of terror under the Emperor of Darkness is still felt. Nobles without faith in the kingdom's ability to stave off calamity deepen their ties to Long Xin.

2440: Long Xin-aligned nobles scheme with Zhao Sun, a disgraced cultivator and military leader from the Long Xin. The nobles seek to install Zhao who wishes to restore his title after a significant military loss and smuggle him into the country beyond the watchful gaze of the Yongwangs. They believe through Long Xin's cultivation magic, they can control the Akryung rising in the country.

2455: Zhao Sun and the nobles backing him lead a coup against Dangun's dynasty. The kingdom

begins to split as territories either side with or rebel against Zhao Sun, the usurper king. The Black Bear Clan maintains a mostly neutral role, deciding to prioritize the eradication of Akryung. Individual members mostly take sides based on regional alliances. Hwanin does not recognize Zhao's authority and does not bestow Gucheon's heavenly mandate on him.

2540: Distrustful of Zhao's true intentions, the Zhu Empire wages war against Zhao and invades Danguk. Zhao falls in battle and Danguk's fractured state enables Long Xin to establish commanderies. The Heavens take a neutral role, leaving their clerics to guide their followers out of this calamity. Nobles loyal to Zhao still believe the empire's necromantic arts to be the key to protecting Danguk.

2580: The Gyerim kingdom to the west was established by King Suryeong, unifying six remnants of noble families from Danguk. He was a part Dragonborn Tiefling who was said to have hatched from the egg of a cockatrice. The Zhu Empire recognized Gyerim.

2600: Goguryeo was founded in the north by King Dongmyeon, or the Archer King Jumong. It was a union between the scattered states of Danguk alongside some Orcish tribes.

2710: The son of King Dongmyeong, Andong, set off with his mother who founded the Kingdom of Saro to the east after a dispute over succession.

2856: Moksaka was born in a distant land. Discovering the cycle of birth and rebirth, he lived his life trying to find a means of escape from it. He would teach for the next fifty years of his life to free one's self from physical attachments.

3460: Mudang King Sureung established the kingdom of Garyang in the land currently known as the Garam Province to the south.

Three Kingdoms Era

3640: Moksaka's teachings reach the Long Xin. The first monks of the Empire appear and travel to spread his teachings across the world, clashing against the principles of cultivators who desire to master death.

3740: Goguryeo wages war and destroys a commandery of Long Xin in the north.

3747: Goguryeo began spreading the teachings of Moksaka throughout Danguk as a means of quelling the Akryung threat and to restrict the Long Xin's influence.

3759: Saro wages war against Goguryeo and slays its king.

3760: Hodamguk announces a position of neutrality, but individual mercenaries align with and assist various states in their wars. Most gather in Goguryeo.

3803: Saro officially declares Moksaka to be its state deity.

3831: Goguryeo consolidated its power by absorbing more tribes and states into its territory. Though Hodamguk has kept to its position of neutrality, several generals and warlords were won over by its strength and personally aligned with the kingdom. Other states begin to look at the region anxiously.

3840: Saro, growing increasingly nervous about Gyerim and Goguryeo, attempted to expand its power by opening trade and political relations with states that would later become the Kyougen Federation. It sent several princes as "hostages" to these states as a sign of good will. Through their relationship, the teachings of Moksaka begin to spread in Kyougen.

3852: Saro and Gyerim formed an alliance against Goguryeo. Goguryeo responds by attacking Saro. It captures the former capital city, Asadal.

3916: After years of working together to fend off Goguryeo, Gyerim betrays Saro and ends the alliance. In the following years, Gyerim annexed Garam.

3917: Goguryeo resisted attacks by the Long Xin, resulting in a costly victory for the latter.

4079: Gyerim allied itself with the new regime in Long Xin. The combined forces overwhelmed Saro and defeated Goguryeo. Sangun generals are captured and exiled back to Hodamguk, not intent on provoking the island just yet.

4095: Gyerim betrayed Long Xin, expelling them from Danguk, and completed the unification

of the Three Kingdoms. Gyerim rejects Hwanin's request to close the country once again and moves forward with becoming a cultural powerhouse, allying with Kyougen domains. Enraged, Hwanin ordered the Yongwangs to withdraw their protection from the lands, to which they reluctantly obeyed. Gwangmoon, the Northern Yongwang, no longer trusts mortals to govern their own lands and schemes to wrest control from them.

North-South States Era

4104: Generals of the fallen kingdom of Goguryeo retreat into the north and establish their own kingdoms. Meanwhile, the King of Gyerim establishes Mudo as a major trading center with neighboring countries, particularly the Kyougen domains.

4120: The Black Bear Clan continued to put all of its resources into pushing back against the Akryung created by grudges of fallen casualties from the wars of the past centuries. Yun Miteum, a renowned, elven Mudang, foresees the eventual fall of Gyerim. She begins to lobby for the Clan's intervention in national affairs to bring order to the world of mortals.

4122: Yun Miteum makes a pilgrimage to Hodamguk to convince the major tribes there to side against Gyerim when the time comes.

4240: The Fox Clan, descendents and acolytes of the Primordial Fox, use the chaos as an opportunity to possess members of noble clans.

4296: A Dragonborn, Wang Geon, was created by Gwangmoon to be his heir, using the divine secrets he had gleaned from the gods to combine his blood with that of Jumong. Gwangmoon initiates his plan to reform the country through his clan. Joining the military to fight off against bandits and ambitious local warlords, Wang Geon began a fruitful career in the military.

4311: As predicted, Gyerim begins to crumble through constant infighting and upheavals. Noble families take power over the king, establishing oligarchic rule.

4320: The Kingdom of Majin was founded to the northwest with Wang Geon appointed as its prime minister. Outcast nobles of Majin unify the remnants of Gyerim against their weak king in favor of Geum Yoon.

4330: Majin's king, Geum Yoon, began to refer to himself as a reincarnation of Moksaka and persecuted those who refuted his claim. The Fox Clan launches a parade of bloodshed in his name, feasting on the livers of monks in particular. The first Bulgasari is born, spreading carnage until Geum Yoon's forces discover its vulnerability to fire.

4337: Yun Miteum meets with Wang Geon and reveals to him that he is heir to the Goguryeo royal clan. She beseeches him to ally with her and four of the kingdom's top generals to revolt against Geum Yoon and form a new country. The revolt succeeds. The Fox Clan that had supported Geum Yoon when he feared his loss of power fights to protect him. Yun Miteum intervenes and defeats them. Goryeo is founded and Wang Geon is crowned its first king, Taejo.

The new kingdom still reveres Moksaka as its patron deity, but Yun Miteum's Mudang are given advisory positions to divine the will of the heavens.

4354: Gyerim surrendered officially to Goryeo, overwhelmed by constant fighting. Goryeo completed unification, absorbing all remaining states, and reestablishing a unified Danguk. Hwanin gives his blessing in the hopes that the Yongwang's plan brings mortals into his fold.

Goryeo Era

4370: Fearing Hodamguk might side with any upstart, young kingdoms, Goryeo wages war against them. They rely on bombardment by mages and divisions of archers to avoid any direct entanglements with the Sangun.

4375: Wang Geon instituted a reform policy that significantly weakened the power of nobles. He inaugurated the first civil service exams that brought a new class of skilled people into government, inspired by Long Xin. Under Gwangmoon's orders, he was quick to execute nobles who turned against him.

4424: Goryeo triumphs over Hodamguk and assimilates the land as a vassal state.

4540: Despite entering a relative time of peace, Wang Geon instituted harsher means of regulating civilian life including the content of arts and scholarship. Scholars and artists favorable to the state were, likewise, elevated, creating an elite literati favorable to militarism.

4589: Mages among the scholar class, supported by sympathetic nobles, launched a military coup against Wang Geon that successfully assassinated him. Gwangmoon takes revenge, personally entering the battlefield with the Wang Clan to put down the coup. The Black Bear Clan, partially out of fear and for self-preservation, sides with the Wang Clan and the Yongwang to maintain its operations across the country. Reform was implemented that disenfranchised and subjugated the country's scholarly class, including Bards, Wizards, alchemists, and artificers, whose work would be put toward military application solely.

4620: Long Xin, under the Yuan Dynasty, again invadesd Goryeo in a series of campaigns across the regions over a century. The power of the Yongwang pushes back against this invasionary force, but civilian participation in the military becomes a regular aspect of life. Increasingly paranoid, Gwangmoon enacts a policy of strict isolationism.

4754: Yi Gyeong is born to a mother with Long Xin lineage. He serves the military faithfully in service of his country while building relationships with dissatisfied military leaders and courtiers in Long Xin. Bearing witness to the Yongwang's power in person, he begins to fear for his country's future.

4807: The Yongwang took the opportunity of a border dispute against the Zhu Dynasty to fuel his ambitions at taking back ancestral territory now claimed by Long Xin. Yi Gyeong, however, was commanded to rout the Zhu Empire at the country's borders. Contacting Archmage Oh Muwon of the Asadal Royal University, he organized a pact with the country's leading scholars who were long awaiting an opportunity to turn against the royal court, the military, and the Wang clan. She was asked to prepare for an internal revolt as he returned to the capital.

Midway, Yi turned his forces around to turn against the Wang clan and the Goryeo court. With their combined forces, they overwhelmed the court and wrested control from the Wang clan.

4808: Yi and his forces hunted the Northern Yongwang in his ancient lair, slaying him. The dragon cursed his country, his children, for betraying him.

4809: Yi's burgeoning government orchestrated a purge against officers that sided with the Wang Clan and also against the Black Bear Clan. Their rationale was that the Clan could not be trusted and would ally with corrupt men and invaders out of self-preservation.

4810: Hwanin made contact with Yi Gyeong, King Seonghyo while alive and Taejo posthumously, about passing on the mandate of Heaven. Seonghyo would acquiesce in exchange for key concessions: the country must reopen and the mortals of the reformed land of Danguk will take their destiny into their own hands. They and the gods will be equal partners in pushing the Gucheon's goals. Hwanin agreed on the condition that his Clerics would be protected.

With this agreement, the kingdom of Danguk was once again reformed. Archmage Oh Muwon joins the King's new Agency of Sage Arts, establishing the Hall of Worthies beneath it, a guild for the country's most esteemed scholars and mages to serve as learned advisors for the crown. Her Luminist faction among sages takes power, adhering to a synthesis between Moksaka and Hwanin's teachings. Their dream is to create a paradise of reason in the material plane.

Age of Illumination

4812: The court invites dignitaries from multiple countries to establish a shared peace agreement. Meanwhile, Archmage Oh invites mages from different countries for a week-long convention of sharing each others' progress.

4813: Civil service exams are once again reinstituted and mandated as a condition to maintain nobility. Military service is also tested through an examination system.

4818: Jang Yong-nam, father of mechanization in Danguk and the man who spearheaded the country's scientific revolution, was born.

4820: The Hall of Worthies invented the early, practical form of the art of Astromancy, enabling wizards to observe and draw power from the cosmos.

4822: Danguk sent its first scholars on their first mission outside of the planet using advances in Astromancy. During their mission, they discovered and made contact with the Lunamorphs.

4825: The nation of Youseki and pockets of the Kojima Chain in the Kyougen region seeks to consolidate power against the other domains by obtaining territory and pathway into Ling Xin by invading Danguk. They identify weakness in Danguk's change in leadership and seek to exploit it before Danguk regains their regional foothold.

4838: Danguk and the Lunamorphs signed a treaty and entered into a close alliance in exchange for a share in technology. Dangukese royal family members would be engaged to elite members of Lunamorph society. Seonghyo routs the Kyougen legions.

4844: The Society of Wailing Souls was formed as a counter to the Black Bear Clan. Dispossessed Mudang from all over Danguk joined them and allied with the Dark Realm. In the Emperor of Darkness's name, they grew as a cult.

4845: Jang Yong-nam is discovered by and enters Seonghyo's court as an engineer. His mastery of mechanization simplifies the use of magic and makes it more accessible to the common man.

4870: Asadal developed its first railway infrastructure and put into commission its first arcane tram. A massive public development project goes underway.

4881: Jang Yong-nam's animated sedan malfunctioned while the king was inside. Bearing the full brunt of the responsibility, he was sacked and never heard from again.

4898: King Seonghyo passes away, given the posthumous name of Taejo, and is succeeded by his son, King Seongdeok.

4910: Pirate attacks would become more frequent. Danguk raises a Navy to combat them.

4942: An alliance of pirates called the Onigashima Syndicate takes over Mudo, an ancient trading port now jointly administered with the Kyougen Federation as a goodwill gesture. Danguk orders its Navy to rout the pirates. The battles end with the pirates bombarded and wiped out. Reports of what had happened on the island were downplayed and veterans who remember have been scarred by what took place.

4999 (Present): King Seongdeok falls ill and is incapacitated in bed. Rumors circulate of poisoning, but no evidence can be magically detected. Grand Prince of Yeongcheon/Yeongcheondaegun assumes the duties of king.

Nidhi Naroth

NEIGHBORING COUNTRIES

While this adventure takes place in the kingdom of Danguk, you might consider playing as characters from other lands. Danguk is written to be compatible with most other settings, but this section contains specific hooks and details to incorporate into your character's backstories. Just as Danguk is based on Korea's culture and history, the following lands of Long Xin and the Kyougen Federation are based on China and Japan respectively. This section does not seek to simplify the entirety of two other countries' histories or cultures, but present enough context that would be relevant to adventurers in Danguk. We hope to expand further in future projects on the histories, creatures, and people of Long Xin and the Kyougen Federation.

THE KYOUGEN FEDERATION

By KappaChris

To the eastern seas of Danguk lies the Seat of the Celestials, a collection of islands known as the Kyougen Federation.The Kyougen Federation is a nascent power in comparison to Danguk and Long Xin. Though fully recognized by her neighboring nations, the Kyougen nationality is still in the process of widespread adoption by her own people as the Unification Accords were ratified only seven decades ago by the four sovereign states that make up the Federation. Despite this developing identity, the country has already made strong shows of political and mystical might through the Sovereign and her court. Ripples of power are resonating from the Kyougen Federation, only the gods can tell whether or not these waves signal an uplifting tide or a destructive coil for Danguk.

To understand Kyougen is to understand the four nation-states that form the Federation. They are Youseki, Inzoku, the Kojima Chain, and Ruumaya. Each one is culturally distinct and traces its magical roots to different origins. Where Inzoku mages are trained to manipulate magical energy from within the self, Youseki spellcasters commune with supernatural entities, borrowing their power in exchange for evangelism. Kojima mages perform mystical feats using runes and artifacts, while the Ruumaya people channel the natural energy of the world around them. These arcane histories are woven into the culture and politics of each nation, informing the gradual evolution of art, entertainment, religion, and even warfare. Since the Unification Accords, all of this knowledge and culture has spread across Kyougen and a veritable renaissance is blossoming. Alongside internal growth, the unification has invigorated and strengthened relations overseas. Vowing to avoid conflict, the nations entrusted a singular person to represent Kyougen. They bestowed the title of 'Sovereign' to Kaguya, a woman with familial ties in each state. While each of the four states act autonomously, the Kaguya unifies them in matters of foreign affairs and interstate commerce. She wields both political and mystical power in the interest of the Federation.

For centuries, the four nations that would make up Kyougen were characterized by the constant struggles for territory and power by mercurial family houses and organizations. To the long standing dynasties of Long Xin, these wars were mere squabbles in a series of soluble conflicts. Historically, this has complicated political and economic relations with Danguk, as conflicting factions within Inzoku, Youseki, and Kojima would seek aid from Danguk through force or diplomacy. Since that era has ended, the ports and trade routes between Danguk and Kyougen are no longer filled with weapons and munitions from Long Xin, but instead textiles, produce, and hallmarks of each nation's culture are ferried back and forth across the sea. Because the Federation has consolidated international affairs under the Sovereign, an ostensible peace now characterizes Kyougen to her neighbors. However, shadows of the generational conflicts are beginning to take form.

Divine and primal sources of magical power are ubiquitous in all eras of the Kyougen history, but until the rise of Empress Kaguya they were scattered. Previously, mages and others gifted with supernatural ability were divided into specializations but Kaguya provided it was possible to be both a generalist and powerful. As a daughter of all four nations: Ruumaya Inzoku, Youseki, and Kojima, Kaguya and her would-be progeny are the personified essence of a unified Kyougen. Before being selected as the representative of the Kyougen Federation, Kaguya learned what made each nation unique, as she lived in each region with her family and ancestors. She shared tables with aristocrats and peasants, generals and farmers. Her

journey spanned several years; across her adolescence through early adulthood. Prior to Kaguya's rise to power, war ravaged the land, threatening to tear apart every nation. It was in this turbulence, Kaguya found peace and shared it with the people. Common folk and nobility alike resonated with her demands for a truce. When the leaders of all four nations convened to select a representative for the Federation, Kaguya was unanimously lauded as the only logical choice. There are few who doubt her legitimacy; only fools would assert she is anything other than a masterful sorceress.

The Federation is named as an homage to historical monikers for the archipelago before the warring period. As the most prominent land mass to the east of Danguk and Long Xin, Kyougen was known as the place from where the sun would rise each day. During Unification, the four nations adopted his imagery in their name, Kyougen, 暁源, meaning Origin of the Dawn.

The Four Nations

The peace of Kyougen has lasted several decades, due mostly in part to the efforts of the Sovereign's Court's attempting to find commonality between the Four Nations while celebrating what makes each one distinct.

Youseki (陽席): Youseki is colloquially known as the Celestial Throne, as people of the region understand their land to be the original dwelling of the Divine Kami from Heaven, the Kotoamatsukami. Kyougen's gods of creation are said to have made their home in the region of Youseki, so ancient mortals developed temples to commune with them. Various leaders have claimed to be descended from these divine powers, forming discipleships and later communities around these claims. Devout followers and evangelists across history have been granted limited control of the gods' powers for their faith. Others unable to gain favor from the kami have forged deals and contracts with other supernatural beings known as yokai. Even prior to unification, Youseki has had amicable relations with the houses and families of Long Xin due to this divine influence. However, this divine lineage has often come into question and even sparked conflict. Today these lines are recognized with a grain of salt, promoting the idea that leadership be recognized by merit over bloodline.

Important people: Youseki Taishi (they/he), main branch leader of the Youseki, advanced age, was one of the original people who signed the Unification Accords, cantankerous. Youseki Misha (she/her), daughter of Taishi, middle aged, distrusting of Kaguya but acts to support the people of Kyougen, confrontational. Kaitaki Rau (they/any), newly promoted Youseki historian, steadfast in accurately representing events in documentation, studious.

Inzoku (陰族): The Inzoku region is known to be home to the oldest cultures and traditions in Kyougen. It is said that when Izanami descended to the realm of shadow, she created creatures of the land. Inzoku's doctrines portray all manner of mortal beings as descendants of shadow, not just the beasts, yokai, and other monstrous beings. Famously, the longest standing belief of Inzoku historians and scholars is that all mortals have some remnant of the power from the realm of shadow. As such spellcasters throughout Inzoku have been trained to draw from this latent power. Inzoku people have spread the knowledge that shadow is not inherently evil, nor is it to be feared, but instead is merely a state of being. "A balance of light and dark is present in all people," is an Inzoku ideology that is gaining popularity and acceptance throughout the Kyougen Federation.

Important people: Inzoku Shoko (they/she/he) head representative of Inzoku in politics, Middle aged, penchant for tradition, stoic. Masumasu (he/him) Inzoku mage teacher, advanced in age, regretful for all the suffering he contributed to in the world, morose. Yogen Utako, (she/her), Masumasu's apprentice/entrepreneur, early adult, talented and knows it, bubbly.

The Kojima Chain: Warm water and tropical air alight on obsidian shores in the Kojima chain, but take care the humidity and haze seem to almost cast a spell, sapping the energy of all those unprepared for the heat. The Kojima Chain is the westernmost faction of the four nations of Kyougen. The Chain extends from the main island closest to Inzoku all the way to the furthest island of the Denjikai Doman. It is also the most peaceful, having never really engaged in the centuries of conflict and wars across the Kyougen lands. Attempts to invade or colonize the isles have always found nonviolent resolution. In

one recorded attempt, a warlord needed to retreat because her entire army defected, exchanging their swords for farming tools. It may be due to the temperate climate or the scattered geography of the Chain, but no one can be certain why, least of all the Kojima Islanders. What Kojima lacks in ambition, she makes up for in variety. Out of the four nations of Kyougen, the Kojima region is the most varied and colorful of her cultures and practices. Within the chain, several dialects and subcultures exist as small pockets of civilization have developed independent of each other. Commerce and trade then brought the individual islands together, and the Kojima Chain became defined by this amalgamation of customs, rituals, and cultures.

Adventure hook: *On the southernmost tip of Isshun, a landmass has appeared on the horizon due east. It does not exist on any map and no one has come back from any attempt to investigate it. Except for one minor lord, who claims that all of his wealth and fortune came from that island.*

Ruumaya: The Ruumaya people inhabit the northernmost regions of the archipelago. The people of the region are touted as the most skilled healers and practitioners of natural magic. Ruumaya are masters of agriculture, innovating agroecological practices in ways unimagined by anyone else in Kyougen. Scholars believe this is due to the sacred relationship the Ruumaya have with the world around them. Whenever Ruumaya lands were threatened by invaders from the north and west, spiritual entities of the land known as kamuy, protected the people and gave them means of fighting back; reforming entire swaths of terrain to help resist invasion, local flora adapting to be used for potions and salves, even granting people the ability to manipulate trees. They treat each aspect of nature as if it holds its own identity and personality. There are tales of some Ruumaya who transcend conventional meanings of life and death by becoming one with the natural order of the kamuy. The Ruumaya people are proficient hunters and adept at guerilla battle tactics; they taught Youseki envoys and fighters these skills in exchange for goods, protection, and political favor. As a result of this historical partnership Ruumaya and Youseki relations, even before Unification, were quite strong. The Ruumaya people have a strong sense of self and identity; more often than not, they see themselves as translators of the kamuy wills

Adventure hook: *It is well known that the Sammoku Forest sings at twilight. As each leaf is different, so is the melody. Maiko, a Ruumaya girl, fears that the music at the end of each day has been growing sadder and sadder. She knows something is wrong, but does not know how to help.*

Sovereign Kaguya and her Court

Behind closed doors; this is the only detail that people know about the council that resulted in the Unification Accords. Kaguya and the leaders of Inzoku, Youseki, Ruumaya, and Kojima parlayed at the height of conflict between the nations. The summit lasted a few hours and resulted in the most historic alliance in Kyougen's recorded history. More surprising than the commitment, was the speed at which it was accepted across the land. Scholars and historians are still puzzled over this. While it makes sense for lower and working classes to have abhorred constant war, a significant portion of the elites were war mongers and politicians who still stood to gain from constant conflict; they might have rebelled against the shift. A popular theory is that the selection of Kaguya as the Sovereign meant that each nation has equal claim as Kyougen's representative.

Allegedly, Sovereign Kaguya's lineage is from all over Kyougen. Her mother was born to a Youseki priestess and Ruumaya healer, and her father was the son of a Kojima fisher and Inzoku princess. She spent much time amongst the people across Kyougen despite the constant war. She cultivated ideologies across borders, honed mystical abilities taught by several masters, and learned the histories of her ancestors. As an adult she began to influence change, eventually demanding it from the controllers of each nation of Kyougen. Yet, Kaguya herself does not outwardly present as a person capable of amazing power or authority. According to few who have communed with her, Kaguya is soft spoken, bemused, and impossibly youthful in visage. She often speaks about the moon and is most animated at the height of the lunar cycle. Even fewer can claim to have seen her magical prowess, but those who have witnessed her exercise that power can corroborate her expertise. While there are those who are dubious about her intentions, trust in Kaguya is a common

thread shared by the handful who are graced by her presence; trust that she acts selflessly to protect the people of her Federation.

The Kyougen Federation is both a singular body and a collection of discrete nation-states. Tumult of war is fading to memory under the Unification Accords, put forth by the leaders of Inzoku, Youseki, Ruumaya, and the Kojima Chain. The collective effort to maintain the momentum of growth of the country and peace

between the nations is known as the Sovereign's Court; they serve as advisors to the Federation's representative, Kaguya. Hand picked by the Sovereign herself, each member of the Court has been tasked with forwarding the identity of Kyougen and aiding in affairs of commerce and politics with Danguk and Long Xin. They mostly operate out of a small estate in the Kojima Chain, which Kaguya claims is the middle point between the lowest part of Takamagahara and the entrance to Yomi. Because of her providential past, it is all too easy to deify Kaguya and her court and over the past 70 years little has been done to curb this perception. For better or worse, immense clout has been amassed within the Sovereign's Court.

Currently, the Sovereign's Court is composed of four individuals, though there have been as many as seven at one point. A veil of mystery surrounds the Court's process, but their identities are widely known.

Inzoku Kota (he/him) is the son of Inzoku Shoko. The newest addition to the Sovereign Court, many believed his high-born lineage is the reason for his appointment. However, Kota is insightful and earnest. Most information and correspondence from the Court comes from him.

Jouyou Hana (they/she/he) aides in correspondence to political officials alongside Kota. Especially with Danguk affairs. Despite their expertise, they are often criticized for their direct communication and lack of decorum. Hana harbors a beastly secret.

Fuu (they/them) is a scholar hailing from the iciest regions of Ruumaya. Fuu does not come from any reputable kinship, but instead is well-read and touts a near perfect memory even in her old age.

Kagami (she/her) is the youngest and most mysterious of the four in the Court. She bears a passing resemblance to Kaguya, leading some to believe that she is the Sovereign's sister or even daughter. No one knows for sure.

Together, Kaguya and her Court correspond with Long Xin and Danguk, sharing magical knowledge, currying political favor, and advancing the perception of Kyougen. Within the Federation, they facilitate councils for commerce and travel. Every few years Kaguya makes a pilgrimage across her country to be among the people. Her path across the Kyougen landscape has been transformed into an expressway for all to travel, known as the Silver Road.

Adventure hook: *Despite her stature, there are those who speculate that Kaguya is not the benevolent leader that she has been propped up to be. Some believe she somehow forced the Unification Accords upon the leaders of the four nation-states and has been keeping the people of Kyougen under a spell for the past 70 years. Others dismiss these rumors as the mere ravings of war profiteers of a generation past. Nonetheless, the theories are spreading across the Federation, catching like fire...*

Oldest Rivalries and Creation of Kyougen

Inzoku and Youseki are the two oldest families and regions of the Kyougen Federation. For as long as there has been recorded history, there has been conflict between the two families. The legends say that they were once a unified clan, a collection of demigod children beneath the House of the Divine Kami, the Kotoamatsukami. Izanagi-no-Mikoto and Izanami-no-Mikoto were two of these children who lived together in peace, blessed each day with bountiful gifts from Heaven and shaping the earth as they saw fit. Until one day a terrible storm sundered the sky and shook the land; this is known as Ooarashi (大嵐) The Great Storm and the event where historical records diverge.

According to Youseki scriptures, Izanami relinquished her divinity and passed it on to Kagu-tsuchi, the Bringer of Fire, before leaving the Divine Kami to perish in the shadow realm, Yomi. Angry

that Izanami would now one day die, Izanagi tore apart the clouds and shouted into the sky. This act was the Ooarashi in the Youseki version of the story. In his rage, Izanagi struck the Flame Incarnate, who splintered into dozens of smaller beings. These beings, born from Kagu-tsuchi, were mortal and became the first people to inhabit the land that would later become Kyougen. The region beneath the House of the Divine Kami would later be called Youseki, meaning Heaven's Seat. The people who lived in the region adopted the moniker as their family name.

The Inzoku recounting of The Great Storm is similar, but key differences give rise to two very opposing factions. Inzoku history notes that Izanami had gone to Yomi, not to die, but to summon Kagu-tsuchi in hopes that their fire would bring warmth and light to the realm of shadow. Knowing that Izanagi would try to stop her, Izanami orchestrated Ooarashi by setting off great explosions of light and noise in the sky to distract him as she descended to Yomi. However, Izanami did not fully understand the magic of Yomi, it behaved in ways unexpected to her. Kagu-tsuchi was consumed upon creation as their light melded with the darkness of the realm and gave rise to mortal creatures. Izanami decided to remain in Yomi to ferry these beings of light and dark to the land. The region flourishing with life became known as Inzoku, as did the people who were children of Izanami.

The two great clans Inzoku and Youseki never found common ground, each one believing they were the stewards of the land determined by their proximity to the celestial origins. Even in the best of times, or during peaceful engagements, their squabbles and semantic disagreements soured commerce and political exchanges, often sparking violent conflict. Reasonable heads have attempted lasting agreements, but within the rivalry, a truce is always fleeting. These days, Youseki and Inzoku leadership are less concerned about conflicts on border regions between their two territories, but disagreements about their ancient histories make for some colorful diplomacy.

Adventure Hook: *The Kojiki is a myth amongst both the Youseki and Inzoku, it is said to be the journal of Ame-no-Minakanushi, the Central Master of the Divine Kami, containing a perfect record of all of history and truth. A curator claims to have found the Kojiki, and is requesting transport across the Silver Road to bring it to Sovereign Kaguya. There have been falsehoods about the Kojiki before, but this instance feels different...*

Invasion of Danguk

The historical tapestries of Kyougen are shared and interwoven with those of Danguk and far before the Unification accords were ever dreamt of. Youseki, Inzoku, Ruumaya, and the Kojima Chain each had their own interactions with Danguk, in particular one that stands out in more recent memory has colored how Unification has been perceived.

Danguk has historically participated in amicable relations with Inzoku and Kojima merchants. Despite this the Kyougen Unification has been met with tenuous apprehension by Danguk officials. 100 years prior to the ratification, the conflict between Youseki and Inzoku came to a momentary truce. A young Youseki leader at the time, General Botara Shin, believed that it would be a perfect time to expand his territory, secure resource streams, and boost military advantage once the ongoing conflict with Inzoku flared up again. Full of confidence and ambition, Shin set his eyes on Danguk, hoping to eventually take parts of Long Xin under Youseki control. In a series of battles that would later become known as Shin's Gambit in Kyougen memory, Youseki and allied Ruumaya generals with additional funding from Kojima financiers invaded Danguk territories.

Shin's forces were met with great resistance, finding advancement into larger cities difficult as Danguk war mages prevented widespread losses. Danguk stalled the invasion long enough for the Inzoku to catch wind of the Youseki movement. Inzoku Ikemi sent emissaries offering aid by sending her warriors and battle sorcerers, but King Seonghyo refused. They were not interested in fighting a proxy war and turning their land into a battlefield of the Inzoku and Youseki rivalry. General Shin pulled his armies out of Danguk upon hearing Ikemi was mobilizing upon the Morokawa, a Youseki-Inzoku border river. Shin's Gambit failed in all of its goals, only finding another enemy in Danguk. The general, Botara Shin, was stripped of all accolades and would pass away greatly shamed. His reputation would serve

as a warning to future leaders in Youseki history. It has been argued that Youseki has been on the defensive in their conflict with Inzoku ever since. Scholars posit that this paved the way for Unification, as Youseki would deign to mitigate further failings. As for Danguk, Shin's Gambit set relations with Kyougen back several decades, if not centuries. Though Kyougen claims the responsibility of the invasion lies solely in Shin's hands, Danguk demands culpability from all domains that played a role in the conflagration. Those who have inherited Shin's imperial ambitions, believing his methods to be flawed but his vision laudable, wage smaller wars over trade routes and diplomacy against Danguk and Long Xin.

Adventure hook: *Botara Shin's legacy is infamous, it serves as a warning to individuals stepping into positions of power. However, small contingencies of clerics and paladins have left their stations to don the Botara crest. There is a rumor that these zealots are fomenting an insurgency...*

The Fifth Nation

Unification brought an end to violent conflict in Kyougen, the resulting peace brought on a wave of ideological and cultural upheaval. Free travel between nations with little fear of trespass or consequence allowed art and literature to spread from the frosted mountains of Ruumaya to the tropical shores of the Kojima Chain, and everywhere in between. Some of the most tangible changes can be found in the food and drink all over Kyougen. Traditional dishes have incorporated flavors and ingredients from as far as Danguk and Long Xin. Magical techniques are melding together, forming new schools of arcane manipulation. Textiles in Inzoku have started to incorporate the geometric designs popular in Kojima, and using fabric materials more common in Ruumaya have changed fashion trends. Self expression mediums, like tattoos or hair, are now in vogue. Despite the accelerating evolution of the Kyougen identity, subregions of Kyougen have been slow, or even resistant, to change; none more apparent than the Denjikai Domain.

The Denjikai (電地海) Domain is a relatively tiny collection of islands southeast of Isshun, the largest island in the Kojima Chain. The cluster is centered around a main island called Uchinaa, though conflation between Uchinaa and Denjikai is common even amongst local inhabitants of the island. The people of the domain have a special relationship with the ocean that connects them. Masters of the tides and the weather, voyagers have an uncanny ability to navigate, explore, and inhabit the water. Many Denjikai people become shipwrights, sailors, or even pirates. Despite its small size, the domain has major influences on the surrounding states. Its inclusion status in the Kyougen Federation depends on who you ask. According to the Danguk and Long Xin governments, Denjikai is its own separate kingdom, independent of Kyougen with its own leading force, the royal Houryu (封竜) family. However, the four nations of the Kyougen Federation recognize the cluster as a subregion of the Kojima Chain. The royal family of the domain has taken advantage of the misconception, and further obfuscated the truth. They only recognize their involvement in the Federation, when convenient or politically advantageous. The true intention of the Denjikai Domain is unknown to anyone outside the innermost circles. Kyougen emissaries and tourists who make the long journey to Denjikai are often surprised at just how distinct the Domain can be. Few elements from the four nations of the Federation are present in the Denjikai culture. While respect for Sovereign Kaguya is present amongst the local population, there is more reverence for the royal family. The most pervasive theory why Denjikai is so distinct is that Uchinaa is so much closer in proximity to Long Xin, than the rest of Kyougen. The journey alone takes special naval charter for most people, teleportation circles being reserved for the most skilled of mages or affluent politicians. This has resulted in Denjikai being far more welcoming to political and cultural attitudes in direct opposition to Kyougen tendencies.

Adventure Hook: *The Denjikai people do not have a formalized religion, most ritualistic practices pay respect to natural phenomena like the sea or summer. Few are starting to adopt religious practices from Youseki clerics. However, Kyougen visitors are starting to hear rumors of clandestine gatherings surrounding a powerful entity that lives deep in the ocean.*

A Calm Surface Betrays Turbulent Waters

A phrase has been popping up every now and then in Kyougen, "A calm surface betrays turbulent waters." This string of words is mysterious to most who hear it, almost ominous, especially to those who have something to hide. It is not presented as a threat, but more as a matter of fact by those who utter it; people from all walks of life, merchants, teachers, sailors, the occasional noble. It is a calling card for denizens within Kyougen courts, markets, schools, fields, and temples who are spies for the Onigashima Syndicate.

To those in Kyougen who know of it, the Onigashima Syndicate is a group of scattered criminal cells throughout the country, the remnants of a defunct criminal organization. Nearly 60 years ago, the Onigashima Syndicate was a formidable pirate guild that operated out of Mudo, a small island territory neutral to both Kyougen and Danguk. That is until Seongdeok, the king of Danguk at the time, ordered the pirate cell be snuffed out. An overwhelming arcane force was launched at Mudo. Kyougen historians would later identify this event as Seongdeok's Inferno, as the blasts had been taken as a sign of aggression. The Onigashima Syndicate was all but wiped out.

Today, small-time captured crooks, impostor mage rings, and dissolved bandit camps have been tied to the Syndicate, but with each passing year the frequency of incidents tied to Onigashima has increased. The only people who seem alarmed by this growth are those directly impacted by Syndicate activity with families and friends whose loved ones may have joined the ranks of Onigashima. They entice misfits, loners, and deviants with the potential of glory or riches; sometimes even an errant aristocrat or security official is lured from their station by the promise of freedom. The most egregious crimes of the Onigashima Syndicate include toll scams along the roads in Inzoku, embezzlement of Youseki temple funds, or even their signature acts of piracy along the shores of the Kojima Chain. These transgressions are sporadic, giving the impression that the Syndicate is disorganized. Petty thieves have been known to take their name to incite fear or intimidate victims who do not know better. It is hard to know just how widespread the Onigashima Syndicate is or who commands them. This is by design.

The grand secret of the Onigashima Syndicate in Kyougen is that they are more than a ramshackle series of gangs. The web of Onigashima operatives and contacts are present throughout the country and they have long memories. The most impactful members ingrained themselves in all levels of society and function with measured and discreet care. Lower ranking operatives are tasked with gathering information and maintaining a façade of weakness. These spies feed information and secrets through their network to one person, Sekiguchi Saemontaro. Saemontaro's goal was to create an independent nation that unites people from all lands, Danguk and Long Xin included. However, after near destruction at Seongdeok's Inferno, it is unclear even to his followers what he is planning. Those who have joined the Onigashima are people who view Kyougen as a failure, antithetical to peace. These are people who wish to shed nationalism and belong to no country.

Despite a hazy purpose, Sekiguchi Saemontaro commands a loyal retinue. While he handles the bigger picture, the leader of the Syndicate delegates most activity to two lieutenants, Barubasu, a former military general for a minor Youseki house prior to Unification and Ritako, a witch strategist who despises the Sovereign, Kaguya. These two have secured various ports and trade routes in Kyougen for Onigashima territory and have recruited key mages and shamans. The most influential ally to the Syndicate comes in the form of the Denjikai queen, Houryu Ukiyaka. It is clear that Queen Ukiyaka's opinion of Kaguya is strained at best as her Domain is largely unrecognized within Kyougen. She gives the Onigashima pirates asylum in Uchinaa and unfettered access to her waters. In exchange the Syndicate provides protection for Denjikai people and feeds darker secrets gathered about Kyougen politics to the Queen.

All of this is happening under the noses of the Sovereign Court and other officials in Kyougen as they are preoccupied with developing the identity of the unified nation. The time for the Onigashima Syndicate to make their next move is approaching. A calm surface betrays turbulent waters.

Fashion in Kyougen

Historically, there have not been very many avenues of self expression through fashion in Kyougen. Of course jewelry, make-up and wardrobe were the most common ways of changing one's appearance, but only the affluent had access to fashion trends. At most, the working class could muster a special color of textile or embroidered pattern on practical wear. However, once the Unification Accords were ratified, new elements began to weave their way into Kyougen aesthetics, some combining together to form new fashion trends. As more artisan and government professions develop, the desire to display wealth and personality outshined the need for practical wear, such as garbs designed solely for combat. In the decades since Unification, the Kyougen fashion industry bloomed.

Wardrobe

Many of Kyougen's textiles and clothing styles are both adapted, but distinct from Long Xin and Danguk. In particular, the kimono and yukata have been compared to Long Xin's longfu and Danguk's hanbok. Kimono and yukata are made of multiple pieces of fabric sewn together to form a T-shape wrapped around the body. The kimono is lined and layered with multiple fabrics, while the yukata is a single layer of fabric, usually cotton. Both can be embroidered or dyed to the wearer's taste or function, and accessorized with belts or pins. One thing that sets the kimono and yukata apart from the hanfu and hanbok is the specific fit. Where the hanfu or hanbok are wide around the legs, the Kyougen localizations are generally tighter and somewhat restrict movement.

Technically speaking, the yukata is a lighter form of kimono, but colloquially they are distinct. Yukata are more common and practical. It is less typical to find yukata with elaborate patterns or colors since yukata can be used for work, leisure, or ceremony. They tend to be worn in one or two pieces and can vary in material depending on the season they are made for. Kimono on the other hand are usually more elaborate and worn to flaunt wealth or personality. These beautiful pieces are primarily made of silk and feature all manner of colors and patterns. Popular themes found on kimono are floral designs, pastoral scenes, or family crests. Since Unification, patterns that are reminiscent of Ruumaya and Kojima fashion have been adapted into modern kimono styles found in Inzoku and Youseki.

Footwear

A specific marker of social class and creed is footwear. Geta are wooden platform sandals and the most common footwear. Cooks would wear geta with high elevation to avoid stepping directly on fallen scraps, rice farmers would wear low and wide geta to prevent sinking into the mud of rice paddies. Higher up the social ladder, it is likely to see geta constructed with higher quality wood, painted with imagery and patterns, and finished in lacquer. Gaining popularity among fishers, hunters, farmers, and traveling merchants are salmon-skin boots of Ruumaya origin called cepker. These boots provide grippiness as the material is slip-resistant after tanning. They also provide decent insulation for colder temperatures, especially when complemented with plant or animal fibers.

Tattoos

Once a major taboo, tattoos have become popular in Kyougen, especially amongst the younger generations that were born after Unification. While it is still very much a young art form with new styles and techniques constantly emerging, traditional techniques from the Denjikai Domain are the most in vogue. Known as hajichi, the tattoo practice involves inking the back of one's hands, fingers, and knuckles with patterns and symbols. These tattoos are mostly found on women, but it is not unheard of for hajichi to be found on people of all genders. This is because the artform of hajichi began as a tactic to deter pirates from kidnapping young women, but it soon evolved into a rite of passage or coming of age gift. Some hajitiya, tattoo artists specialized in hajichi, imbue protective magic into their designs.

Appendix:

Locations

- **Kyougen (暁源):** lit. Origin of the Dawn
- **Youseki (陽席)**
    - **Kintaku-ji (金卓寺)** lit. Gold Altar Temple - The largest temple in Kyougen
- **Inzoku (陰族)**
    - **Yomotsu Hirasaka (黄泉平坂):** The entrance to Yomi
- **Kojima Chain (小島連鎖)**
    - **Isshun** - The main island in the Kojima Chain
- **Ruumaya**
    - **Sammoku Forest** - The largest woodlands of the Ruumaya region
- **Denjikai (電地海) Domain**
    - **Uchinaa** - The main island of the Danjikai Domain
- **Takamagahara (高天原):** High Heavenly Plane
- **Ashihara no Nakatsukuni: (葦原の中つ国)** lit. Central Land of Reed Beds. The Material Plane
- **Yomi (黄泉):** Realm of Shadow

Notable NPCs

- **Kaguya (she/any)** Sovereign representative of Kyougen
- **Youseki Taishi (they/he)**, current main branch leader of the Youseki people
- **Inzoku Shoko (they/she/he)** head representative of Inzoku in politics
- **Sekiguchi Saemontaro (he/him)** leader and creator of the Onigashima Syndicate
- **Barubasu (he/him)** Onigashima lieutenant
- **Ritako (she/her)** Onigashima spymaster in Kyougen
- **Houryu Ukiyaka (she/her)** Queen of the the Denjikai Domain

Jeong Kim

Airi Pan

LONG XIN

By Connie Chang

Long Xin, the Pearl of Earth and Mirror of Heaven, is Danguk's vast and ancient neighbor to the north. A series of hereditary dynasties has ruled Long Xin continuously for over seven thousand years; as long as Danguk has been Danguk, so has Long Xin been Long Xin. Although "Long Xin" refers to the country as a whole, its boundaries have changed innumerable times across the centuries as old rulers die, new rulers ascend, and northern invaders seize control. The Throne of Jade and Bone has seen many monarchs in its time -- some worthy and noble, others cowardly and meek, and others stranger and fiercer still. Wizard-queens, god-kings, and even immortal liches have perched upon the Throne, each with their particular decrees and edicts, but one thing always remains the same: a vested interest in Danguk.

How that interest in Danguk plays out depends on the century, the ruler, the political climate; the social mores, the peasantry, the prevailing attitudes; and, of course, signs and omens from the gods. However, more often than not, the leaders of Long Xin seek to use Danguk to elevate their own holdings. Nothing escapes exploitation, from Danguk's people and resources to the very fabric of Danguk's magic itself. The relationship between Long Xin and Danguk has always been fraught -- shattered by wars and mended with treaties before being shattered all over again.

Like Danguk, Long Xin is a kingdom of magic, monsters, and mages. Although the people of both nations share the same material and spiritual realms, the sorcerers of Long Xin conceptualize Iseung, Jeoseung, and Gucheon in very different ways. The material plane is known as **Tianxia**; the heavenly realm is **Tiantang**; and the ghostly dominion where departed souls go is **Diyu**. Broadly speaking, Long Xin worships many of the same gods as Danguk, albeit under different names, but each has its own exclusive gods as well -- deities uniquely embroiled in their particular kingdoms' affairs. For instance, Dangun and Hwanung are unique to Danguk, whereas the **Three Pure Ones** are unique to Long Xin.

Magic manifests in Long Xin in both similar and different ways to the way it manifests in Danguk. Similarities include a focus on a wide-ranging pantheon of gods and immortals, many of whom compete with each other for mortal favor and divine power; a realm ravaged by hungry ghosts and vicious

monsters; and the ability for mortals to harness spiritual power for their own goals. However, there are some poignant differences, too. In Long Xin, the main form of magic is necromancy: the essence of life and death. Those who can harness necromancy are known as adepts, mages, necromancers, or -- a term native to Long Xin -- **cultivators.**

Cultivators tend to use a favored weapon, wield a divine focus (typically a musical instrument like a guzheng, flute, bell, or drum), and specialize in a particular type of necromancy. Some are clerics who heal grievous wounds by murmuring holy sutras; others are demonic grandmasters who summon dark spirits and control void energy; still others are conduits of raw natural power who can conjure ice, flame, and lightning. Cultivators that achieve the pinnacle of necromancy are called **Zhenren.** Zhenren gain a near-permanent state of immortality where they rule until either overthrown or they decide to ascend beyond their mortal vessel into divinity. There are many conflicting theories about how to ascend to this status, but the true texts are lost to the ravages of time: burned during times of war, destroyed by shamans seeking to cleanse the mortal world of such dangerous knowledge, or hoarded by cults in secret, heavily guarded places.

Throughout the millennia, these kingdoms cross-pollinated in terms of religion, culture, philosophy, language, art, and magic. Nothing is ever static between Long Xin and Danguk. Relations, knowledge, philosophies, and even each country's understandings of their own gods and the physical and spiritual realms that surround them are ever-changing.

However, one constant persists: while the powerful of Long Xin skirmish with the powerful of Danguk, the common people on both sides suffer. As the centuries turn onward, their wheels greased by the blood of the powerless, the peasants remember; they grieve; and they learn. Perhaps one day, the people of Long Xin and the people of Danguk will realize that they have more in common with each other than they do with the elites of their homes. Perhaps one day, that realization will spark a people's rebellion across borders, across nations, and across oceans teeming with dragon-gods. And perhaps one day, that rebellion that will change everything.

Diplomatic Relations

At first glance, current relations between Long Xin and Danguk appear to be the best they've been in years -- maybe even decades. There is no war. Trade flows freely, unrestricted by embargoes, high tariffs, or other sanctions. The major ports on Long Xin's southern shores are open to all. There are even whispers of a high-profile wedding in the works: an arranged union between **Princess Huo Zhiyang**, the Daughter of the Second Consort of the Immortal Emperor, and **Lord Gok Byeong-ho**, the scion of a powerful military family in Danguk. Nobles on both sides are excited and optimistic about the marriage; if it goes through, historical frictions between the two countries will lower their ugly heads and mark the new age of an era of prosperity for both Long Xin and Danguk.

Diplomacy and dreams aside, underneath this sanguine surface, relations between Long Xin and Danguk are more fraught than they appear. Long Xin is currently ruled by **Emperor Zhu Huya of the Zhu Dynasty**: a temperamental, vain, and paranoid mage-king. Emperor Zhu's erratic reign left the peasantry destitute while allowing schemers in the upper echelons to consolidate power. As Huya indulges paranoid fantasies, conspirators of every level expand their influence within the royal courts of **Guxue**, the austere and decadent capital of Long Xin. The rich and powerful of Danguk are aware of Long Xin's troubles and some even seek to exploit this unstable time for their own gain, brokering deals with ambitious agents on the northern shore willing to look the other way -- for the right price, of course.

The realm also incubates a burgeoning peasant rebellion. For the past hundred years, the common people of Long Xin have been restricted from studying magic -- an illegal act enforced by royal decrees from various emperors. In Long Xin, magical secrets are jealously guarded by monasteries, cults, and imperial sects -- the common people almost never get to wield them. Only four classes of people are allowed to wield magic: nobles who are born into their station; scholars who attain their station through rigorous study; artists who have gained the patronage of a noble or scholar; and cultivators, who earn the privilege to wield magic by serving the Throne of Jade and Bone. Regular folk -- farmers,

fishers, merchants -- are barred from even reading about magic, if they know how to read at all. This right is restricted to the most privileged of nobles.

This inequitable proportioning of magic, wealth, food, luxury, and power has been a slow trickle of water against a rock of long-suffering peasants, and now, the peasants will no longer suffer. Many peasant rebellions have risen in the past but failed due to their stark disparity in power against the ruthless mages of the royal court. But now, with science and magic advancing within and outside Long Xin's borders, black markets flourish with new, smuggled magical texts and items. Peasants can access through less than reputable channels advanced weaponry including firearms. Understanding this, rebel leaders side with pirates and sympathetic diplomats to maintain their ties to supporters of their cause outside the country. Meanwhile, the country's nobles adopt protectionist stances and politically and economically pressure their neighbors to aid in crushing these communications.

Such internal strife ensures Long Xin and Danguk teeter on the edge of a scimitar; any disturbance from any direction might tip relations over to open hostility, closed borders, or even outright war. As daring adventurers probe deeper into the connections between these two powerful kingdoms, dark secrets might come spilling out -- secrets of vicious ambition, forbidden love, paranoid conspiracy, and a country one lit match away from an explosion of rebellion.

Notable NPCs

Emperor Zhu Huya (he/him). Zhu Huya, Immortal Son of the Sky, Righteous Fist of the Heavenly Court and the First Death-Killer, is the current ruler of Long Xin. Huya is the great-grandson of Zhu Ming, the legendary founder of the Zhu Dynasty and the woman-king who led a successful rebellion against the preceding Yuan Dynasty. The emperor's great-grandmother had been a tempered ruler: fearsome but not unreasonable; strict but gentle; beloved by nobility and peasantry alike. Many elders remember Zhu Ming's reign with bittersweet fondness, for her great-grandson is nothing like her.

Zhu Huya is extremely unpopular. Terrified of losing power and obsessed with cheating death, the current emperor of Long Xin is an eccentric man. Huya is deeply superstitious and paranoid of spies and assassins. One day, a loyal adviser might be lavished with praise, gifts, and consorts; the next, she might be thrown out to rot in a dirty prison for years, or even executed publicly as a show of force. Zhu Huya sees enemies around every corner of the royal palace and spends most of his days cooped up inside his (considerable) private quarters, receiving reports through crevices in the doors and conducting meetings with folding paper walls between all attendees.

To satiate his paranoia and achieve the greatness he believes is owed to him, Zhu Huya is intent on attaining lichdom. To become a lich, Huya requires both a gem pure, durable, and rare enough to house his soul and secret knowledge of the profane, long-lost ritual that will tear his soul from his body. Huya believes that becoming a Zhenren can be attained through lichdom, keeping his soul inside the gem, known to cultivators as a **baoshi.** Unfortunately for Huya, rulers under the previous Yuan Dynasty's regime burned many of these texts for sacrilege against the heavens; Zhu Ming herself tried to recover some of this knowledge and failed. To attain both the gem and the ritual, Huya turns his attention towards Danguk -- where dark spirits run amok and undead forces conspire.

Consort Wang Biaoxi (she/her). Wang Biaoxi is Zhu Huya's third consort, a low-ranking romantic companion to the emperor, mostly overlooked in the imperial palace... and the true ruler of Long Xin. Biaoxi's goal is to attain lichdom for herself, kill Huya, seize the Jade Throne, and remake Long Xin into an egalitarian society. Until then, she won't overplay her hand, though her heart aches for the long-suffering commoners of Long Xin. For months, Biaoxi cultivated the emperor's fear of death to a fever pitch -- successfully.

A prodigiously intelligent woman, Biaoxi was the daughter of a misogynistic imperial exam administrator who refused to let his only daughter take the test and thus pursue her station in life, instead focusing on the future of his sons. Biaoxi secretly took mock exams since she was nine and never achieved anything below a perfect score. Biaoxi's genius was disregarded from a young age -- a fact that frustrated her as a child, but now suits her as a political maneuverer.

Four years ago, Biaoxi found employment in the imperial palace as an exam tutor, a gloryless job that, coupled with her ruthlessly average looks, made her all but invisible to the court. Over the years, she carefully studied the emperor as she might as an exam topic; documenting his paranoia, his fear of death, and his desperation for greatness. Biaoxi orchestrated romantic chance meetings that turned into dates that turned into intimate nights. And so, the emperor fell in love -- a deeper, more passionate love even than the one he had for his wife and queen.

If Biaoxi asked, he would gladly replace his queen with her -- but she prefers it this way. It's easier to control men from the shadows. Not a single edict is passed, military move made, or royal intervention bestowed without Biaoxi's approval or explicit suggestion; the emperor always consults her first, and takes her word more seriously than that of his oldest, closest advisers. Biaoxi is careful about her power, hiding it as one might an assassin's blade. None but herself and the emperor knows the true depth of their relationship, though there are several in the court who suspect...

Princess Huo Zhiyang (she/her). Huo Zhiyang is the daughter of **Huo Ranxiao**, the second consort of the Immortal Emperor. Zhiyang takes after her mother in almost every way: both women are stunningly beautiful, sick of being cooped up in the royal palace of Guxue, and long for a more exciting life. However, there are two crucial differences. One: Ranxiao's definition of a more exciting life is one where she's the first consort; that is, the actual wife of the emperor and first in line to become mother to the new ruler should he meet his untimely demise. Zhiyang's definition of a more exciting life involves swords, magic, and monsters -- adventurous touchstones she has been denied her entire life within the cushy, well-protected bubble of the palace. The second crucial difference is that Ranxiao thinks that marrying her daughter off to Lord Gok Byeong-ho is the best way to advance their station. Zhiyang doesn't.

Zhiyang met her husband-to-be exactly one time and has hated him since. The meeting occurred half a year ago when the parents of the to-be-weds met on neutral ground, an open port in the Kyougen, to discuss details and secretly probe for weaknesses. Surrounded by the rushing waters of the ocean, Zhiyang met Byeong-ho for the first time... and then Byeong-ho made a comment about death and war that was, in the princess' mind, grotesque and cruel. Scared and disgusted, Zhiyang stormed away from her husband-to-be and locked herself in her quarters for the rest of the week. This display of temper, which is not unusual from the highly expressive and headstrong princess, did not dissuade the Gok family from proceeding with the marriage. A wedding date was set for a year after and Zhiyang has been dreading it since.

No one knows that during that fateful week, Princess Huo met Lady Cha Seo-yoon, the sellsword bodyguard to Lord Gok Byeong-ho. Unlike Lord Gok, Lady Cha had not been born into nobility; she worked her way up from a commoner's rank through her mastery over the blade and spiritual magic. The two fell in love and have kept in contact since through coded letters and secret missives. As the date of the wedding looms ever closer, Princess Huo Zhiyang grows desperate, longing for a way out of her royal life but not knowing how to attain freedom without hurting her mother -- or Long Xin.

Lord Gok Byeong-ho (he/him). Lord Gok Byeong-ho is the scion of a powerful military family in Danguk. Trained from birth to be an efficient killer and feared leader, Byeong-ho quickly rose through the ranks of Danguk's navy, earning the title of Lieutenant Commander by the time he was seventeen. By that time, Byeong-ho had killed more people than he could count on two hands. Most were pirates, though some were fellow naval officers found guilty of sedition or desertion. Byeong-ho is a young adult now, and that death toll has only grown somewhere into the high dozens. He lost count after fifty.

As an admiral in the navy, Byeong-ho's mother, **Lady Gok Joo-Eun**, never offered her son kindness, patience, or the ability to make his own decisions about his future. Byeong-ho was forced to be the perfect son by becoming the perfect killer. Displays of emotion were seen as weakness and summarily punished, either by his mother when he was a child, or by his commanding officers in the navy. His engagement to Princess Huo Zhiyang means nothing to him beyond a duty he will assume like any other.

However, interacting with the animated, fiery, and expressive Zhiyang created confusing feelings inside Byeong-ho -- feelings he never experienced before.

Byeong-ho has a warped view of reality: deep down, he longs for intimacy and compassion, but he doesn't know how to attain either of those things. He feels that he is worthless outside his military gifts. Although Byeong-ho is a high-ranking officer with superb prospects, he feels a gnawing emptiness and struggles to connect with other people. His blank and intense way of talking with others has earned him the nickname of the "living ghost," a moniker that his subordinates whisper when he's not around.

Lady Cha Seo-yoon (they/she). Cha Seo-yoon is Byeong-ho's personal bodyguard, a post she earned as a capable mercenary in Danguk. A tall and imposing warrior, Seo-yoon has a crude sense of humor, a strong craving for alcohol, and an even stronger craving for pretty women. Despite their playboy attitude toward love and romance, they are a dependable fighter, helping various mudang clans and warrior tribes across Danguk settle their problems with monsters and men alike. However, Seo-yoon's penchant for getting into trouble has also created a financial headache for themself: after a few too many nights drinking and gambling, they are now deeply in debt. Fortunately, Seo-yoon secured a lucrative gig from Admiral Gok Joo-Eun: to protect her son in the months leading up to his wedding in return for complete financial assurance.

Soo-yeon quickly grew bored of this assignment as she stood outside closed doors, staring at servants passing by with delicious-smelling food she wasn't allowed to eat. Without any time to herself, she couldn't leave her dreary post by Byeong-ho's side. Only her promised payout motivated her as she daydreamed of fighting monsters, wrestling with ghouls, or flirting with pretty girls in the nearest run-down tavern. All of this changed when Seo-yoon accompanied the Goks to the Kyougen... and met Princess Huo Zhiyang. At first, the princess was annoyed by Seo-yoon: in her eyes, they were boorish, crass, and uncultured. But as the week went on, Seo-yoon grew on Zhiyang -- especially as Seo-yoon revealed a softer side. The two fell in love and kept in touch after they left the Kyougen.

Seo-yoon knows she's tempting fate by romancing her client's betrothed behind his back, but she can't help it. She's always made bad decisions -- that's nothing new -- but loving Zhiyang might be the first good decision she's ever made. This time, her actions might hurt someone she loves.

Captain Ye Xin (he/they). Ye Xin is a middle-ranking officer in the Long Xin navy with bigger dreams than his competence allows him to bite off... for now. Though Ye Xin isn't much of a fighter, a cultivator, a scholar, a mage, or even a leader, he is good at something: schmoozing. He hopes to one day rule Long Xin from the shadows as a mastermind puppeteer.

Ye Xin grew up on the streets of **Yucheng**, a coastal town in a southern province of Long Xin. Though mediocre, they excelled in sniffing out what people really wanted. They used their uncanny insight to improve their station in life until they seized a post in the navy -- one of the few ways commoners in Long Xin can elevate their standing. Climbing the chain of command was difficult for Ye Xin, as earlier ranks are earned through combat and skill, but it was smooth sailing as soon as Ye Xin overcame those initial hurdles.

Over the years, Ye Xin amassed a vast and reliable network of informants: orphans who listen for street-level rumors; cooks, maids, and servants who traverse the royal courts, the perfect flies on the wall ignored by the rich and powerful; sex workers who glean dark secrets from loose-lipped nobles clouded by lust; and criminal contacts who can smell trouble brewing before anyone else. As a result, Ye Xin has learned that the emperor is secretly looking to become a Zhenren-- a real Zhenren, not the title-only "Immortal Son of the Sky" rubbish that previous rulers of Long Xin settled for. Ye Xin also knows that Emperor Zhu is paranoid, self-obsessed, and terrified of death.

Ye Xin maneuvered himself into leading the pushback against smuggling operations between Long Xin and Danguk. Ye Xin has it on good authority that the emperor is waiting on a specific shipment of... something, though he doesn't know what. They hope to collaborate with the **Nightjar** to uncover the truth behind the emperor's ploys and blackmail the most powerful man in Long Xin.

Shuyun (they/them). Shuyun is the leader of the **Peasant Mages**, a growing people's rebellion headquartered in **Yucheng**, a seaside town on the southern coastline of Long Xin. As the fourth child of a poor fishmonger, Shuyun's parents and siblings starved to death along with the rest of their now-forgotten village when their provincial lord provoked the ire of a sea spirit by overfishing. To punish his greed, the spirit cursed the seas surrounding Yucheng to grow fallow. This tragedy radicalized an already angry Shuyun, who spent their entire life watching the powerful abuse their positions without consequence while the powerless suffered.

Shuyun is an intelligent and compassionate leader and a terrifyingly powerful cultivator. After losing their entire village and on the brink of starvation, Shuyun dragged themself to the doors of the **Shadow Crane Temple**, a cultivator sect high in the mountains. The cultivators refused to let them in -- they had no training, no recommendations, no reputation to speak of; they were just a hungry, desperate child. For seven days and seven nights, Shuyun banged on the doors of the temple, howling to be let inside. Impressed by the child's fortitude and sheer force of will, the cultivators let them in -- and taught them the magics that had long since been forbidden to them as a mere peasant. Shuyun rose through the monastery's ranks until they outclassed even their mentor. When they bested their teacher in combat, they left the Shadow Crane Temple to pursue their true ambition: destroy the corruption that oppresses Long Xin's common folk.

Shuyun knows they are an anomaly. Most regular people -- the ones they seek to champion -- are unable to attain the heights of divine mastery that they have. They also know they cannot take down Long Xin alone, nor do they want to. Growing up among the Shadow Cranes taught them that community is everything. As the leader of the growing movement of Peasant Mages, Shuyun's strategy is threefold: raid merchant ships carrying new technologies and magical knowledge, arm their followers with these bounties while instilling the prudence to use them responsibly, and feed them.

In addition to these "acts of piracy" that Long Xin's monarchy calls Shuyun's merchant ship raids, the Peasant Mages also provide the people of Long Xin with ample food, clean water, and seeds. They do so by using the necromantic magic of Long Xin to make plants grow, cleanse the soil of corruption, and banish scorned spirits from haunting homesteads and farmlands. This earns the Peasant Mages strong support among the common people of Long Xin; for every town they feed, they pick up a dozen new recruits.

As Shuyun and the Peasant Mages grow in influence, the monarchy of Long Xin cracks down on their raids. This becomes increasingly dangerous for the Peasant Mages as Shuyun sets their sights on the latest shipments coming in from Danguk -- perhaps shipments carrying objects the emperor desperately needs.

The Nightjar (xe/xem). The Nightjar is a well-connected smuggler of all manner of illicit goods between Long Xin and Danguk whose crew -- the Murder -- is comprised of cutthroat pirates, criminals, and mercenaries. The Nightjar's got a finger in every pie -- Long Xin, Danguk, the nobles, even the peasantry. Xer policy is simple: get the job done, no matter what it is, as long as the pay is right. Xer services are available to the highest bidder; xe stays neutral as much as xe can so xe can reap the greatest profit.

On the surface, the Nightjar and xer Murder are motivated solely by money. But deep down, the Nightjar's primary concern is xer crew. The Nightjar and xer Murder are a ragtag group of misfits and outcasts, and all they have is each other. They don't fit in anywhere: not with the other commoners, who are terrified of them and scorn their violent ways; not with other criminals, whom they've double-crossed multiple times; and certainly not with the powerful. To that end, all the Nightjar cares about are xemself and xer crew; xe stays out of politics as much as xe can and throws away conceptions of "good" and "evil" in favor of taking care of xer own family.

The Nightjar's real name is **Yinshen.** Xer tale is as old as time: a streetwise orphan who never had a family; who survived by stealing and lying and, eventually, killing; who should be dead; but who isn't. The Nightjar keeps private and looks down on those who harp on their broken pasts; in xer eyes, everyone's broken -- no one's special in that regard. What matters is what you do with your brokenness; for the Nightjar, that's taking care of xer own. No one knows

the Nightjar's real name or story except for xer first mate, **Shrike.**

Fashion in Long Xin: An Overview

The styles of clothing worn by folk in Long Xin is collectively known as longfu, which translates to "clothing of the dragon": a nod to a popular origin story about Long Xin's ancestors springing from the spilled blood and cracked bone of a dying dragon as the world's first ever act of necromancy. Longfu are typically comprised of slip-on shoes, trousers or a skirt, and a loose robe (changpao) with a sash. Changpao are typically worn with the left collar overlapping the right as a gesture of the wearer pledging their heart to the emperor. Those who clasp their robes right over left are seen as seditious; the only exception is during funerals.

Another popular longfu is the pifeng, an outer robe with broad, billowing sleeves that can be worn both indoors and outdoors as well as during all four seasons of the year. In the colder regions, doupeng are common: insulated, sleeveless cloaks that ward off the chill and are layered on top of other clothing. Although these garments are worn by everyone in Long Xin, the details surrounding them -- such as materials, colors, and patterns -- vary based on three major factors: social standing, profession, and magical status.

Real-World Cultural Note

Although Long Xin draws heavy inspiration from real-world histories, it is not a one-to-one allegory for China. Creative liberties infuse unique fantasy elements into Long Xin, many of which are culturally specific -- and many of which are not. For instance, the term *longfu* is a nod to *hanfu*, the traditional styles of Chinese dress; translated into English, *hanfu* means "clothing of the Han." The Han don't exist in Long Xin, either as an ethnic group or as a dynastic legacy, so using the term hanfu would be misleading.

Another divergence from real-world legacies is the reasoning behind fastening one's changpao left over right. Many cultural experts believe this practice stems from Ming Dynasty powers wanting to differentiate themselves from "barbaric" northern clans (i.e., the Mongols). Long Xin's worldbuilding is intentionally crafted to avoid playing into colonialist tropes of "civilized" peoples versus "barbarians," even from a historically informed context -- hence the reimagining. Long Xin reimagines and reinterprets aspects of the Ming Dynasty to create a wholly unique necromantic fantasy kingdom.

Shang

At the bottom of the social hierarchy -- though not the bottom of means -- are shang: traders and merchants. Shang are widely regarded by the rest of Long Xin society as moochers who produce nothing and live off the labor of others. Despite this reputation, many merchants wear robes of cloth and silk dyed in rich, eye-catching colors to differentiate themselves from the peasant class. To ward off criticism from peasants and scholars alike, many merchants vie for the coveted **Black Skull Cape.**

The **Black Skull Cape** is a special *pifeng* bestowed upon tradespeople who have served the dynasty in some outstanding way. No two Skull Capes are exactly alike, though their overall design is the same: a pitch-black silk robe with bone-white patterns evocative of the wings of a death's-head hawkmoth. These capes are enchanted with necromantic magic that compels those who owe Black Skull merchants money to pay off their debts at any cost.

Nong

Nong are peasant farmers who adorn themselves in homespun, long-lasting *longfu* that skimp on frills but are durable and hardy, spun from cotton or clothes and dyed in simple colors like brown, cream, tan, and gray. Most manual laborers wear a hip-length jacket over an undershirt, paired with a skirt to form a *ruqun* or trousers to form *shanku*. Robes are fastened shut at the waist with a sash and left open during labor for ventilation, revealing bare chests across genders. Commoners wear unpretentious shoes of wood, kudzu, or corn leaves. Working families who assiduously save for a year or more can afford more durable footwear made from tanbark, pelt, or crepe. A peasant's most prized possession is usually their doupeng, which keeps them warm during the colder seasons.

Although magic is a restricted practice, some commoners incorporate chrysanthemums into their everyday wear as a folk tradition to disinvite negative necromantic omens, wearing the flower in their hair, carrying dried petals in their pockets, or sewing floral patterns onto their sleeves. For many Long Xin'rs, chrysanthemums represent life and longevity, which combats necromantic energies. This belief is so strongly held that the **Peasant Mages** use chrysanthemums in their iconography. Some officiants have even imposed bans on chrysanthemums, fearing they might dampen the potency of the emperor's necromancers -- or foment revolt. Most cultivators need not fear the humble chrysanthemum, however; regular flowers are harmless. Only enchanted blooms can truly drain a cultivator's power.

Peasant Positionality

Nong occupy a contentious place in Long Xin society. They comprise the vast majority of the population -- by some censuses, up to 90% -- and are widely considered diligent, hard-working folk who sustain the kingdom through sweat and blood. However, they are also the most disenfranchised class of people: the first to suffer from bureaucratic corruption, disallowed from practicing magic, and valued solely for their labor. Multiple holidays a year celebrate the nong, involving empire-provided feasts, entertainment, and mandated rest -- a small luxury that keeps the people happy and (ideally) prevents them from rebelling.

Gong

Gong are artisans and craftspeople whose clothes befit their livelihood: carpenters and potters wear *shanku* with tight sleeves; painters prefer changpao of elegant cuts; jewelers adorn themselves in graceful *ruqun* and shoes woven from brocade. Gong are well-respected in Long Xin, economically situated above nong but with none of the baggage of shang, as craftspeople are considered to be productive members of society.

Many artisans possess a set or two of truly beautiful *longfu*: sweeping robes with enchanted patterns of clouds and herons that move on their own; a glittering crown with gemstones that change color; shoes that sing with every step. These objects tend to possess little practical value but are widely coveted by peasants, merchants, and artisans alike as the closest thing to magic that they are allowed to achieve.

Shi

At the top of the social order are shi, noble scholars who serve the emperor directly and run the day-to-day affairs of the kingdom. Shi are split into two major subcategories: bureaucratic officiants and necromantic cultivators. The former wear long, sweeping changpao of various gem-toned colors that befit their particular substations: red for military officials, blue for scholars, brown for exam administrators, white for mystics and holy folk, green for economic administrators, purple for civil servants, gold for courtesans, and black for the emperor's spouses.

As for necromancers... well, they wear whatever they want. Some prefer the long, graceful look of changpao and go to great lengths to attain the perfect custom robe that befits their practice; others dress in plain *shanku* and can be easily mistaken for a peasant farmer. However, formally recognized cultivators (i.e., the only legitimate cultivators in the kingdom's eyes) must adhere to a strict dress code that befits a proper necromancer: unsullied robes, their focus in plain sight, and hair adorned in one of eight acceptable styles. More rules about dress and behavior are added every day by the paranoid **Zhu Huya**, who fears treason at every turn -- especially from his precious royal cultivators.